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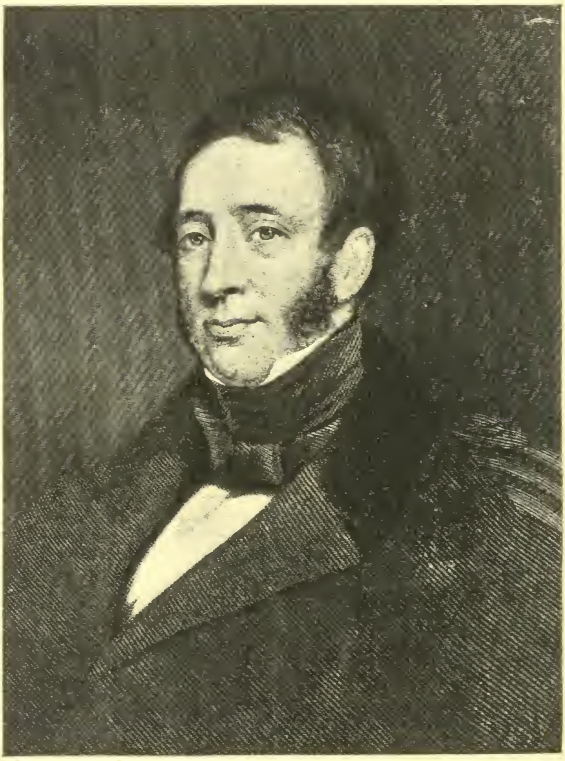

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THE

UNITED IRISHMEN

THEIR

LIVES AND TIMES

WITH SEVERAL ADDITIONAL MEMOIRS, AND AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS, HERETOFORE UNPUBLISHED: THE WHOLE MATTER NEWLY ARRANGED AND REVISED

BY

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WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS

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CHAPTER I.

"There is no greater error," says Sismondi, "than to suppose that any great event, or epoch, can be profitably viewed apart from the causes by which it was produced and the consequences by which it was followed. The habit of viewing facts apart from the circumstances by which they are connected and explained, can have no other result than the fostering of prejudice, the strengthening of ignorance, and the propagation of delusion". To no portion of history is this truth more strikingly applicable than to the "Lives and Times of the United Irishmen": it is impossible to appreciate their motives, or form a right estimate of their conduct, without an accurate knowledge of the circumstances of their age and the condition of their country; and this knowledge can only be obtained by examining the causes that produced the very anomalous state of society in which they lived and acted. Ireland is a puzzle and perplexity to Englishmen and English statesmen, chiefly because they are unacquainted with its history; or, what is worse, that they have received as its history, fictions so monstrous, that many of them amount to physical impossibilities. A brief outline of the history of the English connection with Ireland is therefore necessary, to show how it happened that, at the close of the eighteenth century, two distinct bodies were preparing to reject allegiance to England, what motives led them to unite, and how their formidable union was dissolved.

The four first centuries after Strongbow's invasion passed away without the conquest of Ireland being completed: the wars with France and Scotland, the insurrections of the Barons, and the murderous wars of the Roses, prevented the English monarchs from establishing even a nominal supremacy over the entire island: instead of the Irish princes becoming feudal vassals, the Anglo-Norman barons who obtained fiefs in Ireland, adopted the usages of the native chieftains. The attention of Henry VII. was forcibly directed to this state of things by the adherence of the Anglo-Norman barons and the Irish princes with whom they had formed an alliance or connection, to the cause of the Plantagenets. They supported Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck; when these adventurers were defeated, they showed the greatest reluctance to swear allegiance to the Tudors; and Henry could not but feel that his crown was insecure, so long as the Irish lords had the power and will to support any adventurer who would dispute his title. From that time forward it became the fixed policy of the Tudors to break down the over-

grown power of the Anglo Irish aristocracy, and to destroy the independence of the native chieftains. In England the Tudors were enabled to create a new nobility; the progress of the Reformation was accompanied by the elevation of several new families to the peerage, and the struggle between the Protestants and Catholics in that country, was for a considerable time identical with the contest between the old and new aristocracy. In Ireland it was impossible to adopt the same course of policy: there was not a gentry from which a new aristocracy could be formed, and the Tudors were forced to supply their places by grants of land to colonists and adventurers. The Irish and the Anglo-Norman barons looked upon these men as intruders, while the ruling powers regarded them with peculiar favour, as being the persons most likely to establish and promote an "English interest in Ireland". This political motive must not be confounded with the religious movement which took place about the same time; it was as much the object of Mary as it was of Elizabeth, to give Irish lands to English settlers, in order to obtain a hold over Ireland; it was under Mary that the lands of Leix and Offaly were forfeited, and the lord-deputy permitted to grant leases of them at such rents as he might deem expedient.

In the midst of this political convulsion, an attempt was made to bring Ireland to adopt the principles of the Reformation, which had been just established in England. There was a vast difference between the situation of the two countries, which deserves to be more attentively considered than it usually has been. It was on a papal grant that the English monarchs, from the very beginning, had rested their claims to the allegiance of Ireland, and there was consequently something like an abandonment of these claims, when they called upon the Irish to renounce the supremacy of the Pope. But not only had the English kings described the Pope as the source of their power; they had for centuries made it a principal object of their policy to maintain the power of the episcopacy and priesthood in Ireland, against the ambition or avarice of the Anglo-Norman Barons. They had themselves armed the Church with power and influence greater than they could overthrow.

After the long night of the Middle Ages, an intellectual revival had filled Christendom with discussions which weakened the strength of ancient institutions, and prepared men's minds for the reception of new opinions. Ireland had not shared in the general movement; whatever may have been the condition of the island before the English invasion, the

1. A pitiless war of extermination went on for many years until the original owners and peasantry were almost completely banished or extirpated. The settlement happily never entirely succeeded, and in the course of time the old owners came back.

four centuries of political chaos and constant war subsequent to that event, had rendered it one of the most distracted countries in Christendom; there had been no precursors to make way for a religious change; the Irish had never heard of Huss, or Wickliffe, or Luther, or Calvin. The only intelligible reason proposed to them for a change of creed, was the royal authority; and they were already engaged in a struggle against that authority, to prevent their lands being parcelled out to strangers. Add to this, that the reformed religion was preached by foreigners, ignorant of the very language of the country, and there will be little difficulty in perceiving that the attempt under such circumstances to establish Protestantism in Ireland, by the conversion of the Irish, was utterly impossible. In fact, the project of converting the natives was soon abandoned for the more feasible plan of colonizing Ireland with Protestants from England.

The calamitous wars of Elizabeth's reign were waged by the Irish, and by the descendants of the Anglo-Normans settled in Ireland, equally in defence of their land and their creed; when the insurgents prevailed, they expelled the Protestant ministers and seized the goods of the English settlers; when the royalists triumphed, they established churches and confiscations. After ten years of almost incessant war, an expenditure of money that drained the English exchequer, and of life that nearly depopulated Ireland, the entire island was subdued by the arms of Elizabeth; but the animosity of the hostile parties was not abated, they had merely dropped their weapons from sheer exhaustion. Colonies had been planted in the South of Ireland on the estates forfeited by the Earl of Desmond and his adherents, but the settlers were nothing more than garrisons in a hostile country; they continued "aliens in language, religion, and blood" to the people by whom they were surrounded. Under such circumstances it was not to be expected that many of the higher ranks of the English clergy or laity would seek a settlement in Ireland; most of those who emigrated were more or less attached to the principles of Puritanism, which Elizabeth hated at least as much as she did Popery, and this circumstance gave the Protestant Church in Ireland a stronger tendency to Calvinistic doctrine and discipline than would have been allowed in England. Geneva was a greater authority with the Irish Protestants than Lambeth, as any one may see who consults the canons of the Irish church; and this unfortunately widened the difference between them and the natives of the country they came to colonize.

A new difficulty about the tenure of land arose, which afterwards produced very fatal consequences. According to English law, the ultimate property of all estates is in the

Crown, and land is held only by virtue of a royal grant: according to the Irish law, the property of land was vested in the sept, tribe, or community, who were co-partners with their chief rather than his tenants or vassals. Whenever a change was made from Irish to English tenure, an obvious injustice was done to the inferior occupants, for they were reduced from the rank of proprietors to that of tenants at will. This principle was never thoroughly understood by the English Lords Justices, and hence they unintentionally inflicted grievous wrongs when they tried to confer upon any portion of the country the benefits of English law. In fact, the change from Irish to English tenure involved a complete revolution of landed property, which would have required the most delicate and skilful management to be accomplished safely; but those to whom the process was entrusted were utterly destitute of any qualifications for such a task. The Commission of Grace issued by James I., for the purpose of securing the titles of Irish land, was viewed with just suspicion by the great and the small proprietors, and its results were an uncertainty of tenure and possession, which kept every person in a state of alarm.

The real or supposed plot of Tyrone, Tyrconnel, and O'Doherty, afforded a pretext for confiscating the six northern counties over which the sovereignty of these chieftains extended; but whatever was the amount of their guilt, it is obvious that they could only forfeit that which they themselves possessed. They were not the proprietors of these counties; the actual occupants of the soil were not accused, much less convicted, of any participation in the plot; and therefore the sweeping seizure of half a million of acres, without any regard to the rights of those who were in actual possession, was a monstrous injustice, to which few histories can furnish a parallel. It must, however, be confessed, that this violent and odious measure was quite in accordance with the spirit of the age; confiscations and grants of land had become a regular part of the public administration under the Tudors, and was continued under the Stuarts; the old Norman aristocracy was thus broken down, and means provided for endowing a new nobility; the security of the reformed religion was insured, because its interests were identified with the tenure of the new estates. The Ulster confiscation differed from the forfeitures in England and the South of Ireland, chiefly by its vast extent; in order that the grants to new settlers should be efficient, it was necessary either to remove or exterminate an entire population.

Setting aside the consideration of justice, the plans which James formed for the Plantation of Ulster, were on the whole wise and prudent. It was resolved that the land should be divided into estates of moderate size; that the grantees should within a limited time erect bawns, that is,

castles with fortified court-yards; that they should settle a number of English or Scotch tenants on the lands; that they should reside on their estates, and never alienate any portion of them to the mere Irish. Had the King combined with this scheme a plan for doing justice to the native occupants, and had the local government executed the royal instructions as they were originally framed, the Plantation of Ulster might have produced all the good which is ascribed to it, without the attendant evils by which it was, at least for a considerable time, more than overbalanced. At first every thing seemed to promise a favourable result; the City of London took an active share in the scheme, and built on its grants the cities of Coleraine and Londonderry; the new order of Baronets was created, and the sums paid by those who purchased this new dignity, were destined to the support of soldiers for the defence of the new Plantation.

The first difficulty which presented itself, arose from James's resolution to give a proportion of the forfeitures to his Scottish countrymen; a determination which gave great offence to the English, and which eventually exercised a fatal influence over the fortunes of the Stuarts, for the Scotch who settled in Ireland were subsequently the staunchest of adherents to the Covenant. A more fatal error was the choice of settlers: surrounded by a set of hungry favourites and mendicant courtiers, James bestowed grants of lands with a reckless profusion surpassing that of Henry VIII. at the suppression of monasteries. Instead of a valuable body of settlers, he created a hungry horde of land-jobbers; English tenants were sparingly introduced, few bawns were built; proprietors remained at court and entrusted the management of their grants to agents, and the fatal system of sub-letting was established under the sanction of the City of London.

It is not necessary in the present day to dwell upon the notorious profligacy, corruption, and infamy of the court of James I., or to show that no iniquity was too monstrous, and no craft too mean, for the royal idiot when he sought the means of gratifying his rapacious favourites. Irish forfeitures had proved a most valuable supply, but the extravagance with which they were given away soon exhausted the stock, and it became necessary to seek out new sources of plunder. An inquisition into titles, based on the principle of English law, that the right of possession to estates must be ultimately derived from the King, was the expedient which presented itself; but as English law had not been introduced into the whole of Ireland until the close of Elizabeth's reign, and as four hundred years of anarchy had produced countless usurpations and uncertainties, there was scarce a landed proprietor in Ireland whose estates were not placed at the mercy of the crown. A new host of harpies

was let loose on the devoted country; the lawyers and the judges were incited to use every device of legal chicanery, by promises of a share in the spoil; and to the half a million of acres confiscated as we have before described, another half million was added under pretence of informality in the title. Even this amount of forfeitures was insufficient to gratify the rapacity which the King's lavish distribution had excited, but in the midst of the proceedings, early in 1625, James died, and the task of completing his project devolved upon his unhappy successor.

In some instances the proprietors of these estates fought their cases in the law courts, and when they hoped to obtain a favourable verdict, the witnesses and jurors were shamelessly suborned to give evidence and verdicts in favour of the King. The whole country swarmed with a tribe of rascals, termed "Discoverers", who gave information about titles that could be considered faulty and who in reward obtained possession of the estates or were bought off with large sums of money.

The pecuniary distresses of Charles inspired the Irish proprietors with the hope of obtaining security; they presented to the King certain regulations for confirming the titles of estates, and establishing an indulgence of religion, called "Graces", and offered the King a very large subsidy. The Irish gentry, Catholic and Protestant, offered to pay £120,000 (nearly a million pounds of the present day); provided he would permit them to become the law of the land. Charles took the money, and eluded the performance of his promise. He had adopted his father's principle of policy, to create at all hazards an "English interest in Ireland", and to effect this by pushing the principle of forfeiture to an extent which James himself had not contemplated. Wentworth, afterwards Earl of Stafford, was the Lord Deputy chosen to execute this iniquitous project, and he commenced his proceedings on the largest possible scale, by attempting to obtain the forfeiture of the entire province of Connaught, under the pretence of defective titles. One jury in the county of Galway had the courage to find a verdict against the crown; Wentworth arrested the jurors, brought them before the Court of Star Chamber in Dublin, sentenced each to a fine of four thousand pounds, and to imprisonment until the said juror had confessed on his knees that he was guilty of wilful and corrupt perjury. The sheriff was thrown into prison, and Wentworth pressed hard that he should be executed as a warning to other functionaries, adding "My arrows are cruel that wound so mortally, but it is necessary that the King should establish his rights". The forfeiture of the lands of Connaught, and perhaps of all Ireland, would have been completed, had not the increasing troubles in England and the open revolt of Scotland induced Charles to

recall his Deputy to scenes of more immediate interest and importance. It became the King's interest to conciliate his Irish subjects, and the "Graces" became the law of the land.

A considerable Irish trade in wool and woollen cloths flourished at this period,but Wentworth took steps to destroy it as it was alleged that the Irish wool trade seriously interfered with that of England. On the other hand he fostered the linen industry, which could do no harm to England, and thus unwittingly laid the foundation of a great and flourishing industry in Ulster.

The "Graces", it is true, were passed, but the King was no longer a sovereign; his power had been transferred to the Puritan Parliament of England and the Covenanters of Scotland; both of these bodies formally declared that they would not consent to the toleration of Popery in Ireland, which was in fact to proclaim a war of extermination against the Irish Catholics. A conspiracy was organised against the supremacy of the British Parliament; the main object of those who joined in it being to obtain for Catholicism in Ireland the same freedom which the swords of the Covenanters had won for Presbyterianism in Scotland. An associate revealed the plot to the Puritan Lords Justices at the moment it was about to explode, and Dublin was saved from the insurgents. But the signal of revolt on October 23rd 1641, spread desolation over the northern counties; the native Irish, who had been driven from their lands at the time of the Great Plantation, rose upon the settlers, and in spite of the exertions of their more merciful leaders, drove them from their settlements, and when they encountered any resistance, slaughtered them without mercy. This massacre has been absurdly exaggerated, and prejudice has often induced writers to involve all the Catholics of Ireland in its guilt. During this outbreak many Protestant settlers were protected by their Catholic neighbours, and the whole body of the Catholic Clergy spared no effort to save life. The Lords Justices sent military parties from Dublin, who murdered all the people they met whether engaged in rebellion or not. The activities of Sir Charles Coote in Co. Wicklow were particularly notorious, and in Munster Sir William St. Leger slaughtered vast numbers of wholly innocent people, in order, as he is reported to have said, to avenge the cruelties committed in Ulster. The Scotch Presbyterians were not only spared, but were allowed to retain possession of their property until they took up arms to support the cause of the English Puritans; in fact, the Ulster revolt was rather a Jacquerie than a rebellion, and it was of course accompanied by all the outrages and cruelties which might be expected from an infuriated and starving peasantry, brutalized by long oppression and goaded by ostentatious insult. It is said that about twelve thousand

persons were probably murdered in the first outbreak of popular rage before the Catholic lords and gentry could interfere and give the insurrection the dignity of a civil war. This number is probably in excess. A sanguinary proclamation, issued by the Lord Justices, and a formal vote of the British Parliament that Popery should be exterminated in Ireland, rendered the civil war inevitable, and rendered it impossible for any person to devise a means of compromise and conciliation.

In the early months of 1642, there were four distinct parties in Ireland, each with an army under its control :—

First. The Old Irish, under Rory O'More. This party was oppressed by Plantations and religious persecutions. They aimed at total separation from England.

Second. The Anglo-Irish Catholics. They also suffered from Plantations and religious disabilities. They aimed at achieving religious and civil liberty, but were content to remain under the domination of England.

These two parties represented the Catholics of Ireland but unfortunately there was no union between them, and this eventually led to their downfall.

Third. The Puritans, including the Presbyterians and the Ulster Scots. General Munro commanded their army, and was very hostile to the Catholics.

Fourth. The Royalist Party. Chiefly Protestants of the Established Church who were opposed to the Parliamentarians. They were the party of the King, and bitterly opposed the Catholics.

Had it been possible for the Catholic Royalists to trust the Protestant friends of the King, and the native Irish to coalesce with the Lords of the Pale, Ireland would have been tranquillized and secured for the King in a week, for the Puritans were in a miserable minority; but during the whole duration of the civil war in England, the several divisions of the royal party in Ireland spent their time in despicable squabbles, which served no purpose but to increase their mutual animosities.

During the earlier part of the year the war went with varying fortunes, sometimes the Irish troops secured victory, and at others the Government forces prevailed. In Ulster, Munro's force amounted to about 20,000 fighting men, and owing to the lack of military knowledge displayed by the leaders of the Irish soldiers he soon had the whole province at his mercy. In July, Owen Roe O'Neill, a distinguished Irish soldier, landed in Donegal, and assumed command of the Old Irish army. He soon affected a change in the fortunes of the Catholic cause. Colonel Preston, brother of Lord Gormanstown, landed on the Wexford coast, and took command of the Anglo-Irish Catholic army.

Up to this time the two branches of the Irish Catholics had acted independently, but an effort was now made by the Catholic bishops and other highly placed persons to bring the two parties to an understanding. In accordance with this plan an assembly of the most distinguished personages on both sides met in the City of Kilkenny, on October 24th, 1642. This was the "Confederation of Kilkenny". Of course the Royalist garrison in Dublin proclaimed them as rebels, but this was denied by the Confederate leaders who declared their unalterable attachment to the King.

In the midst of the almost incredible blunders and follies of the Royalists and the Irish, Cromwell landed, and by the massacres of Drogheda and Wexford, diffused terror over the land. But even these fearful warnings failed to produce a union of parties; the friends of the Papal Nuncio thwarted the plans of the King's lieutenant; the Protestant Royalists openly expressed dislike of their allies; the native Irish could not be brought to coalesce with men of English descent. Whichever party prevailed in the council, the minority took vengeance for defeat by betraying the common cause to the common enemy; and it seemed as if Cromwell had only to look on tranquilly until his adversaries had torn each other to pieces. But he was too hurried to wait; he marched onward, marking his track by fire and desolation. Some places, particularly Clonmel, made a resistance which would have afforded an opportunity for changing the whole course of the war, but the Commissioners of Trust, appointed by the council of confederate parties, countermanded the orders of the Lord Lieutenant, and he thwarted every one of their projects; the garrisons were abandoned to their fate, and a handful of Puritans became masters of Ireland. The confederates had nothing more to do than to dispute which party had the greatest share in producing such a calamity.

Cromwell's system of confiscation was on a still more magnificent scale than that of the Stuarts; he shared the lands of Leinster and Munster amongst his soldiers, and amongst the private individuals or public companies that had advanced money to defray the expenses of the war; he restored James's Plantation in the northern country, and extended it so as to include nearly the whole of Ulster. Finding it difficult to realize his plan for the total extirpation of the Irish nation, he resolved to confine the Irish Catholics to the more remote of the Four Provinces into which the island is divided, and he issued the order of removal with spartan brevity, "To Hell or Connaught". In Connaught itself, he ordered the Catholics to be expelled from all the walled towns, though they were of English descent, and scarcely less jealous than himself of the native Irish. The strictest orders were issued for the suppression of Popery, and priests found in the exercise of their religious duties were hanged

without ceremony.

The soldiers who accompanied Cromwell to Ireland were the fiercest of the Republicans and the most bigoted of the Puritans; they had been selected on this very account, because they were the most likely to resist the usurpation which Cromwell meditated in England. But the possession of property has a very soothing influence on political and religious fury; the Cromwellians, as the new settlers in Ireland were generally called, acquiesced in their general's assumption of royal power, and would not have opposed his taking the title of king. They soon foresaw that the death of Oliver would lead to the restoration of Charles II., and they made their bargain with Charles II. before Monk commenced his march from Scotland. They represented to him that the great object of the policy, both of the Tudors and Stuarts, was accomplished to his hand—"an English interest was established in Ireland", and the future dependence of the island on the British crown was insured. Charles was a Catholic in his heart, but he readily consented to become the patron of "the Protestant interest" in Ireland, because that interest was wholly English.

There was, however, such monstrous injustice in confirming the forfeitures of persons whose only crime was loyalty to his father and himself, that Charles found it necessary to establish a Court of Claims, in which those who had only taken up arms to support the King's cause might be permitted to prove that they had not shared in the insurrection against the supremacy of England. So many established their innocence, that their restoration would have involved a new and almost a complete revolution in the landed property of Ireland. The Cromwellians were alarmed, and threatened an appeal to arms; their wiser leaders offered Charles a share in the confiscations; the Court of Claims was closed and a Parliament was assembled from which the Catholics were excluded. In 1661 and 1665 the Acts of Settlement and Explanation were passed, and were called, not without good reason, "The Magna Charta of the Protestants of Ireland", for they bestowed the property of nearly the entire country on "the Protestant and English interest".

No greater misfortune could fall upon any nation than to be delivered into the hands of a body of proprietors who felt that their title was defective, and that the tenure of their estates was constantly exposed to the hazards of revolution. They believed, and they believed justly, that if ever the Catholics and native Irish recovered political ascendency, they would immediately demand the restoration of the forfeited estates; they lived therefore in a state of continual alarm and excitement, and they were forced to place themselves completely under the control of England, in order to

have British aid in protecting the property which they had acquired. But this servile dependence on the British Government and British Parliament was a painful bondage to men who had not quite forgotten the stern republicanism of their ancestors; and, on more than one occasion, they evinced symptoms of parliamentary independence, which not a little annoyed their British protectors. But these struggles were rare; they felt that they were a garrison in a conquered country, and that if they were abandoned to their own resources they would soon be compelled to capitulate.

The accession of James II. was not at first very alarming to the Cromwellians ; they knew that this imbecile and obstinate man was blindly attached to his hereditary policy of maintaining an "English interest in Ireland", and they had proof of his determination when the Irish gentlemen deputed to remonstrate on the injustice of the Act of Settlement, were dismissed with ignominy by the King and Council. About this time Catholics were admitted to the army, and many Protestant regiments were disbanded.

The Revolution was an event wholly unexpected in Ireland; it took both parties by surprise, filling the Protestants with alarm, but inspiring the Catholics with little hope. At this time the destinies of Ireland were entrusted to Richard Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, who had undertaken the hopeless task of preserving the English interest and at the same time destroying the Protestant ascendency. His first impulse was to capitulate with the Prince of Orange, who was very willing to give Ireland most favourable terms; unfortunately, he was persuaded by Hamilton that James's party had every chance of recovering England, and he broke off the negotiations. James came to Ireland, distrusting his Irish subjects and distrusted by them. One of his earliest measures was to disband several regiments of the Irish army, which was actually done at the very moment when he was preparing to resist an invasion from England. He might with ease have quelled the northern Protestants in Derry and Enniskillen, but he feared that the unpopularity of such an act would destroy his chances of restoration in England; for the same reason, he did all in his power to prevent the Irish from gaining the victory at the Boyne, and he secretly exerted every art in his power to defeat the repeal of the Act of Settlement.

The dread of the Cromwellians that they would be compelled to restore the forfeited estates to the original owners, or their representatives, whenever the Catholics regained the ascendancy, was now proved to be well founded. An act for the repeal of the Act of Settlement was hurried through both Houses, and had this cruel injustice, that no provision was made to remunerate the Protestant occupants for the improvements and outlay they had made. This was accom-

panied by an act of attainder against the partisans of William, which was scarcely less iniquitous than any of the preceding confiscations. It had the effect of uniting all the Protestants of Ireland against James, and though they were not a numerous body, they were trained to the use of arms and full of all the vigour arising from continual ascendancy.

The flight of James, the battle of Aughrim, and the siege of Limerick, are sufficiently known. Ireland was subjected to English dominion by the Treaty of Limerick, and the title of the Cromwellians to their estates formally recognized by the Irish themselves. A fresh act of attainder took away most of the land which had been left in the hands of the Catholics by the act of attainder, and the "English interest in Ireland" virtually possessed nine-tenths of the property of the country.

The Anglo-Irish, or Cromwellian landlords, had been thoroughly frightened; there were moments in the contest when William's success had been very problematical, and at such times they must have felt that they stood on the brink of ruin. They resolved, therefore, to adopt a course which would prevent the Catholics from attaining such power, political, pecuniary, or intellectual, as would ever enable them to renew the consequences. The system which they adopted was a collection of Penal Laws: "it was", says Edmund Burke, "a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement, in them, of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man". These laws, in which fanaticism and intolerance seem to have been carried to their most savage excess, were not in fact derived from either passion. They were designed for the protection of property which had been unjustly acquired, the tenure of which was derived from an act of parliament passed by the possessors themselves, and which was therefore liable to be repealed when they ceased to command a majority in the legislature. The code, with terrible consistency, began its severities with infancy:—Catholic children could only be educated by Protestant teachers at home, and it was highly penal to send them abroad; Catholics were excluded from every profession except the medical, from all official stations, however trifling; from trade and commerce in corporate towns; from taking long leases of land; from purchasing land for a longer tenure than thirty-one years; from inheriting the lands of Protestant relatives, and from possessing horses of greater value than five pounds. On the other hand appropriate rewards were offered for conversion; a child turning Protestant could sue his parents for sufficient maintenance, the amount of which was determined by the Court of Chancery; an eldest son conforming to the Established Church at once

reduced his father to the condition of a "tenant for life", reversion in fee being secured to the convert, with a proviso that the amount allocated for the maintenance and portions of the other children should not exceed one-third. There were rigorous laws against priests and the celebration of mass while a small annual stipend was proffered to any priest who recanted.

We have said that these laws were dictated by self-interest and not by religious passion; the proof is easy and irrefutable. These laws were mostly promulgated by the Irish Parliament, and remained in force for nearly three-quarters of a century. It is notorious that the laws prohibiting Catholic worship were executed far less strictly than those which excluded from public offices, civil professions, and lucrative industry; the latter were never relaxed until they were totally repealed, and even after their repeal it was attempted to defeat the efficacy of the concessions made to the Catholics by various legislative devices. Fanaticism, like every other passion which is real, has something respectable in its character; but spoliation and nothing else was the object of the Penal Laws; they were designed solely to maintain the monopoly of wealth and influence for a party. The sacred name of religion was a convenient cry to secure the prejudices of the English people in support of a system, the support of which would scarcely have been afforded if it had been known that the true meaning of the cabalistic phrase "Protestant Interest", was "pounds, shillings, and pence".

The original Cromwellians were Republicans and Puritans; they abandoned a large portion of their political feelings, but they retained much of their ancient hostility to prelacy, and would have very gladly got rid of the Established Church. Swift's works sufficiently prove that the Irish Whigs of his day were eager to get rid of the bishops and to establish the Presbyterian form of Church government. Though the sacramental test excluded conscientious Dissenters from the House of Commons, there were many who conquered their scruples to the form, and sat in Parliament ready to embrace every opportunity of weakening the episcopal establishment. They gave a remarkable proof of their feelings, and a very edifying example of their logic, by unanimously voting that "whoever levied tithe of agistment was an enemy to the Protestant interest"! It was an improvement on Lord Clarendon's witty proposal, "that the importation of Irish cattle into England should be deemed adultery". It was this dislike of prelacy which made the great body of the Irish Protestants hostile to a union with England. When such a measure was proposed at the beginning of the eighteenth century, a Protestant mob broke into the Irish House of Lords, placed an old woman on the throne,

got up a mock debate on the introduction of pipes and tobacco, and compelled the Lord Chief Justice to swear the Attorney-General that he would oppose the measure. The hostility of these men to the supremacy of the English Church rendered them jealous of the supremacy claimed by the English Parliament, and of the restrictions imposed upon their trade by the English people. It is impossible to read the pamphlets published by the party just before the accession of George III., without perceiving that their aspirations for legislative and trading independence, logically carried out, would have gone to the full length of making Ireland a Protestant republic. Dread of the Irish Catholics, however, kept them quiet, and it might almost be said that the Catholics at the time were really the "English interest in Ireland".

There was a marked difference between the Protestants of the north and those of the rest of the country. The Plantation of Ulster had been completed, the Protestants there were able of themselves to protect their lives and properties, and they were conscious of their own strength. In the rest of Ireland, the Protestants, thinly scattered over a wide surface, were obliged to rest their hopes of defence on the British Government, and were therefore led to cling to the Established Church as a bond of connection with England, and to make concessions which were odious to the sturdy northerns. This difference between the Episcopalians and the Presbyterians, which was at once geographical, religious, and political, fostered the development of republican principles among the latter; "the spawn of the Old Covenant", of which the governing powers frequently complained, was not, as some had represented, an unmeaning danger; up to the close of the last century, it was an actual and increasing element of organized resistance to the existing system of government. The custom of eating, a calf's head on the 20th of January was observed in most Presbyterian families, and the favourite toast, "the pious, glorious, and immortal memory of William III." was clearly as strong a pledge to revolutionary principles as to religious supremacy. It was for this reason that Lord Plunkett called the insurrection of 1798 "a Protestant rebellion", because, so far as the revolt had aim or object, it derived both from the Protestants by whom it was originally devised.

It is necessary to bear in mind the nature of the republican party which had been formed in Ireland previous to the American and French revolutions, in order to understand how it was influenced by both events. The party was

Swift wrote many pamphlets about the state of the country at this time. Perhaps the most remarkable of these was—**The Present Miserable State of Ireland. In a Letter from a Gentleman in Dublin, to his Friend S. R. W., in London.** Dublin, 1727.

exclusively Protestant, and more bitterly hostile to Popery than the adherents of episcopacy and monarchy; its views, at least its ultimate views, were speculative rather than practical, for it stood opposed, at the same time, to the population of Ireland and the power of England; its efforts for legislative and commercial independence were illogical, for they were made to assert rights abroad, which rights the asserters ostentatiously denied at home.

"The South of Ireland", says a writer of the last century, "offers an almost unvarying picture of Protestant oppression and Popish insurgency"; and in his view, as well as in the view of many others, the oppression was excusable because it was "Protestant", and the insurgency criminal because it was "Popish". The truth is, that the Whiteboy disturbances to which he refers had no more connection with religious controversy than with the disputes between the Scotists and Thomists. Whiteboyism was an association against high rents and tithes, a barbarous Jacquerie; and its causes were obvious to all who were not wilfully blind; in the words of Lord Charlemont, they were "misery ! oppression ! famine !" It was a war of the peasantry against the proprietors and occupiers of the land, undertaken, and still occasionally revived, to wring from them the means of subsistance. The barbarities inflicted by these rural revolters, were such as have ever marked the career of similar insurrections in various ages and nations; the landlords employed executioners, and the serfs hired assassins; the gallows and the pike were military implements; the legal rights and power of property were set in opposition to the natural rights and physical power of existence. In all these contests the might of England enabled the landlords of the south to obtain temporary triumph, but they purchased it at an enormous cost, and every new pressure of distress produced a fresh explosion of resistance. There was no connection whatever between the republican spirit of the north and the insurrectionary spirit of the south: the Whiteboys contended for no specific form of government; they contended for a more substantial and intelligible object—food. If they were permitted to cultivate their lands and live peacefully on the fruits of their industry, they would not have cared, indeed they would scarcely have known, whether they were governed by a king or by a directory.

The disturbances in the American colonies threatening to make large demands on the resources of England, it was deemed prudent to conciliate the Irish Catholics by some relaxation of the Penal Laws. Such wisdom had its reward: during the whole of that arduous contest the Catholic body

The Catholics assisted, by every means at their disposal, to suppress the Whiteboy disturbances, and in Kerry, Lord Kenmare, a great Catholic nobleman was particularly active in aiding the forces of the Crown.

remained faithful to the English Government, and evinced little or no sympathy for the revolted colonies. It was far different with the northern Presbyterians; on the alarm of an invasion Ireland was destitute of troops; the Volunteers suddenly sprung into existence, and took the defence of the country into their own hands. Self-officered, self-armed, and self-directed, an armed association stood in the presence of a feeble government, dictated what terms it pleased, and established at once the legislative and commercial independence of their country. The Catholics had contributed a little to this successful result, and they were rewarded by an abolition of the laws which restricted their possession of property.

The Volunteers next demanded a reform of parliament, which was an utter absurdity when disconnected from Catholic emancipation, while to this they were most vehemently opposed. The two questions were so intimately connected that they could not be dissevered, for it is impossible to conceive "a full, fair, and free representation of the people", when three-fourths of the nation were excluded from the class of electors and representatives. The Volunteers could not combine reform and Protestant ascendency, but yet would abandon neither; as a necessary result their powerful confederacy was broken to pieces.

Ireland had hitherto been ruled by the supremacy of the English parliament; it was now to be governed by the corruption of its own. The experiment was very expensive, but it so far succeeded that the annals of the world could not furnish a more servile, mercenary, and degraded legislative body than the independent parliament of Ireland. Votes were openly bought and sold; "infamous pensions were bestowed on infamous men"; the minister in direct terms threatened the country with the cost of "breaking down an opposition"; and the legislature was viewed with contempt wherever it was not regarded with hatred. Parliamentary reform began again to excite attention; it was supported by a very able though not numerous body in the legislature, and in the interval between 1782 and 1789, it made a very rapid progress among the Protestant gentry and freeholders. Already measures had been proposed for organizing a new association to extend the franchise, when the French Revolution, which astounded all Europe, produced its most powerful effects on the miseries and passions of Ireland.

THE BADGE OF THE UNITED IRISHMEN.

Previous to the year 1789, the idea of slavery was associated or rather identified with the names of Catholics and Frenchmen; the Revolution was toasted because it had delivered the country from "popery, slavery, brass money, and wooden shoes"; and it was part of the British popular creed "to hate the French, because they are all slaves and wear wooden shoes"; the assertion of freedom by Catholics and Frenchmen at once put to flight a whole host of honest prejudices, and removed the objections which many of the northern reformers entertained against the admission of Catholics within the pale of the constitution. The determined supporters of the Protestant ascendancy were therefore finally separated from the ranks of the reformers, and the latter professed their determination to extend the blessings of constitutional freedom "to all classes of men whatever".

It is now necessary to cast a glance at the social changes in the south, which were nearly contemporaneous with the alteration in the state of the political parties of the north. We have already seen that every civil war, rebellion, insurrection, and disturbance in Ireland, from the reign of Elizabeth downwards, had arisen, more or less directly, from questions connected with the possession of land. The abolition of the tithe of agistment rendered pasturage so much more profitable than tillage, that the landlords throughout Ireland began to consolidate their farms and expel their tenantry, most of whom were Protestants, for few of the Catholics had risen above the rank of agricultural labourers. Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," which was written about the time that the clearing system commenced, is by no means an exaggerated picture of the recklessness with which landlords removed whole villages of Protestants, the descendants

of those who had been induced to settle in Ireland by the exclusive privileges conceded to them by the policy of the government. Vast numbers of Protestant tenants emigrated from Ireland, and chiefly from Ulster, to America, just before the commencement of the revolutionary war; they supplied the United States with a body of brave, determined soldiers, animated by the bitterness of exiles, and a thorough detestation of the supremacy of England. Their places were chiefly supplied by Catholics, who appeared ready to work as labourers for lower wages, and to pay higher rents as tenants. The Protestants of Ulster felt themselves injured by these new competitors in the labour and land market, and they resolved to drive the Catholics back to Connaught. Armed bodies, under the name of "Peep-of-day Boys", attacked the houses of Catholics, ill-treated their persons, burned their houses, and wrecked their property. On the other hand, the Catholics formed an association for self-protection, under the name of "Defenders", and the two parties engaged in a desultory and murderous warfare, in which it is obvious that the name of religion was a mere pretext, by which the parties disguised their real objects from others and even from themselves. This social war excited a rancorous animosity between the lower ranks of Protestants and Catholics, and stimulated their mutual bigotry, at the moment when liberality of sentiment was beginning to become fashionable amongst the higher and better educated ranks of both communities.

A further relaxation of the Penal Laws aggravated these evils; so calamitous had been the results of the perverse system so long pursued, that even the beneficence of government could not be displayed without injury. The trafficking in seats for parliament was so profitable, that every landholder became anxious to increase his interest in the counties by the manufacture of votes; but as the elective franchise was restricted to Protestants, who were limited in numbers, the demand for Protestant tenants was greater than the supply, and of course they were able to make their own terms in taking land. But, in 1794, the elective franchise was conceded to the Catholics, without admissibility to parliament; there was no longer a reason for showing a preference to Protestant tenantry, and the question of religion was absorbed in that of rent. The Protestants of the middle and lower ranks throughout Ireland, felt that this new competition was a direct injury to their interests, and most of them vented their rage in renewed hatred of the Catholics, while an enlightened few more justly blamed the selfishness of their own landed aristocracy.

The Peep-of-Day Boys later became Orangemen, and the Defenders merged into the United Irishmen.

The republicans and the reformers had been united under the common name of Volunteers, without very distinctly perceiving that there was any difference in their designs and objects, until the progress of the French Revolution began to fill the Irish whigs with alarm; they seceded from the Volunteers; many of them began to oppose the projects of reform which they had previously advocated, and once more the party to which the country had looked for redress of legislative grievances was broken into hostile fragments.

The republican party in Ulster felt that it must either be annihilated, or that it should lay aside the spirit of sect and the pride of race to form a frank conciliation with the Catholics of the south, on equal terms, for obtaining equal rights. The remnant of the once powerful Volunteers was a feeble, inefficient body; it could only regain numerical strength by transforming itself into the new association of United Irishmen.

Theobald Wolfe Tone was the most active agent in effecting the apparent union; apparent, we say, for Tone's own memoirs show that at no time was there a perfect harmony between the Presbyterians of the north and the Catholics of the south; even had they united in a successful rebellion, the exasperating passions called into action by civil war would have prevented them from uniting in forming a settled government.

This was the capital error of the United Irishmen; they did not see that no principle of union really existed. The peasantry of Munster and Connaught cared not a jot for their plans of an ideal republic; they might be induced to take arms, for they were almost constantly on the verge of insurrection against their landlords, but their revolt was sure to be nothing better than a Jacquerie, accompanied by all its horrors and all its blunders. Their Presbyterian adherents would indeed have given to their insurrection more of the dignity of civil war; but the feuds between the "Peep-of-day Boys" and the "Defenders" still rankled in Ulster, and, if they once learned to look on the southern insurrection as "a Papish rebellion", and such a character, at least in appearance, it must necessarily have assumed, it was all but certain that they would aid the government in its suppression. The United Irishmen, or rather the leaders who acted for them, believed that all these difficulties would have been overcome by the presence of an auxiliary army from France, and they therefore adopted the perilous measure of inviting a foreign invasion.

The Parisian massacres of September, 1792, had an immense effect in Ireland; men who were moderate republicans feared to accept freedom accompanied by such horrors; the Catholic aristocracy, always a timid and selfish body, offered to support government in withholding their

own privileges: the Catholic clergy separated in a body from the Reformers, and denounced the atheism of France from their altars; if the government had only united concilation with coercion, the tranquillity of Ireland would have been insured. Such was the policy which the English minister first resolved to adopt. Earl Fitzwilliam was sent to Ireland; measures were introduced which at that crisis would have been received with enthusiastic gratitude; but unfortunately the intrigues of party interfered, and to all the causes of discord which had been accumulating for centuries were added unexpected triumph in the party of the few, and unexpected disappointment in the party of the many.

There was never a body of men placed in so strange a position at this crisis as the Catholic priests; in their hatred of French infidelity and atheistic republicanism, they had become zealous royalists, and had the mortification to hear themselves universally represented by the dominant party as the apostles of sedition. For more than two centuries it had been the fashion to represent every Irish rebellion as "Popish", and it would have been strange if so convenient an excuse as "Popery" for refusing justice and continuing oppression, should have been neglected, at the moment when the perpetuation of wrong was the avowed policy of government.

In order to compensate for the abandonment of measures of conciliation, the ministry urged forward their coercion laws with railway speed; the Volunteers were disarmed, the towns garrisoned, public discussions prohibited, the sale of arms and ammunition forbidden, and all conventions of delegates subjected to legal penalties. These energetic measures were promptly enforced; they encountered a momentary resistance in Belfast alone, and then all opposition was speedily quelled at the point of the bayonet.

The United Irishmen were now changed into a secret society: on the one hand, its members being removed from popular control, were less trammelled in forming their plans for the regeneration of their country; on the other hand, they were secluded from gaining any knowledge of the state of public opinion, they had no means of discovering how far the nation was prepared to adopt and support such schemes. Under these circumstances, nothing but aid from France would have afforded the slightest chance of success: the failure of Hoche's expedition rendered their cause hopeless. In their increased danger of detection and dread of consequences, they fixed and adjourned the day for taking up arms, until the boldest became timid and the prudent withdrew altogether. In one of these intervals the northern insurrection had been nearly precipitated by a daring exploit, which, if attempted, would probably have succeeded. At a splendid ball, given in Belfast, the magistrates of the county

and the military officers had met to enjoy the festivities, without the remotest suspicion of danger; the principal leaders of the United Irishmen stood in the crowd looking at the gay assembly; one of them proposed to seize so favourable an opportunity, to anticipate the day appointed for the signal of revolt, at once assemble their men, arrest and detain the magistrates and officers as hostages, and establish a provisional government in Ulster. The bold counsel was rejected by the majority, but the wiser minority saw that the timidity which rejected such an opportunity was unworthy of reliance, and either made their peace with the government, or quitted the country.

France, at the close of the eighteenth century, adopted the same selfish and erroneous policy towards Irish insurrection, which the courts of Rome and Madrid had pursued in the end of the sixteenth. Its rulers encouraged civil war in Ireland, chiefly as a means of distracting the attention of the British government, and preventing its interference in the political changes which French ambition meditated on the Continent. Holland and the Netherlands were the real objects at which the French Directory aimed, when they promised to assist the republicans of Ulster; and, curiously enough, these countries were the prize for which the kings of Spain contended when they tendered their aid to Sean O'Neill, and the Earl of Tyrone, two centuries before. A reasonable suspicion of the French alliance began to extend itself among the wisest of the United Irishmen. Tone himself, in his memoirs, reveals to us that there were moments when his enthusiasm was not able to conquer the lurking fear that France might either take the opportunity of making Ireland a province tributary to herself, or restoring it to England in exchange for the frontier of the Rhine or the supremacy of Italy. Every delay in sending the promised auxiliary force increased the fears and suspicions of the United Irishmen; their best leaders were hopeless of success without foreign aid, and were at the same time alarmed at the prospect of foreign influence in their councils. Hence arose fresh sources of dismay and disunion, which soon afforded plausible excuses—for treachery to the base, and for desertion to the timid. The informer was amongst them, with the price of their blood in his pocket; their plans were made known to the government as soon as they were formed; the snares of death compassed them around; the hand that clasped them in simulated friendship had written their doom; the lips professing the warmest zeal in their cause had sworn to their destruction. They had, in fact, become mere tools in the hands of the very government which they had intended to overthrow; they were mere puppets, to be worked until they had produced so much alarm as their rulers deemed necessary for ulterior objects, and then to be

THE PRESS.

PRICE 2D.] DUBLIN, THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1797. [No. 1.

"NO reason is more true than this. "That no liberty can survive the Liberty of the Press" it is plain, is not into the body of a People, it forms their sentiments, and by reaching them their virtues and their rights, and inspiring them with the sensibilities of virtue and courage, by which both are to be enforced, secures to the people of Ireland, at this moment, yet in the dark, upon the perversion of which, the fate of Nations depends; and the most pure hands, officiating for the public community, should be unreasonably employed in keeping it alive. But it must be acknowledged, that by some fatality of fate, the [illegible] in place, or, upon occasion, active [illegible] are neglected their cause, in the service of which, it ought to volunteer. The Patriot has branded his bosom too often the practice of those who have sought popular confidence—economy, and not profit, was their chief object; and it is not surprising, that what was predicated necessary in the beginning, should, in the end, be perplexed and corrupt. So many and so sad have been the opportunities which have taken place in this respect, that a serious and humiliating and democratic to the Tribunals, has obtained, and the late Disposal Office, with great reason, has gone so far as to doubt the existence of a free patriotism, unalloyed by [illegible] or other high pecuniary, they have [illegible] Press intimidated so often in all the charms of a virtuous virgin, shamefully degenerate and [illegible] the prime embrons of the minister behind the curtain—with all the bolder part of a public prostitute".

It is now proposed to establish a News-paper, to be solely and unalterably devoted to the people of Ireland and their interests, under the aspect [illegible]

THE PRESS.

For the reasons before stated, it occurred that more good would arise in the form of a public paper, to be uncensored, but rather, that the outlayers of two pages should be reduced to speed for themselves, and the print to live or die by the charm after which [illegible] the grounds upon which they [illegible] Accordingly, we shall be sparing in a few [illegible]

Tho' [illegible] any ambitious and [illegible] a candid Union of all the sources of [illegible] of information and legal government, as a principle, dirty, so it shall be the [illegible] "The Press should not be [illegible] and government in the [illegible] of [illegible] individually, as figure means of rendering those [illegible] very a great and happy name, to cultivate the seeds of virtue, heroism and wisdom, which are [illegible] in their minds, shall be chief objects of its unceasing vigilance—[illegible] seek be plentifully and [illegible] the good will, and be [illegible] of Ireland, [illegible] then until they shout forth in all the glory of [illegible] to effect Ireland to be the [illegible] of Nations, and to give her an imperial place in the map of Europe to assert and obtain, her commercial rights, to [illegible] her manufactures, British monopoly, to increase these maxims of economy and liberty, without which no nation can be great or respectable; to open new channels for industry, and aid employ of her people in manufactures and improvements, in our fisheries and our collieries, from the mines of wealth which, in compliance to the assertions rather mistaken nations are doomed to continue unwalked, to infuse notions of pure morality into the rising generation, and to recommend an attention to the moral virtues of religion. While a course of which its Sovereign [illegible] to the [illegible] of public [illegible] Congress indelibly on the mind that, next to a love of God, the love of Country should have a place in the human breast; and finally, if it be not too presumptuous, or a project nearly impracticable, to procure a reform in the Abuse of government, which are crying and manifold; these are the grounds on which the PRESS solicits confidence—all it asks is a fair trial, "and may the moment of its dissolution be the last of its existence" A system, such as no News-paper has gone to the expence of heretofore, has been adopted for procuring the earliest intelligence, which shall be impartially given; a particular attention shall be paid to the detail of domestic occurrences, and a faithful report given of the speeches, configurations, transportations and executions, without the intervention of judge or jury. To friendly scenes so dismal, we shall gleam wherever may be most impartial and amusing in the *Bible Leaves*; there still be the more room for this gratification of our readers in the course of the approaching winter, as there is no probability of any debates in the House of Commons; and of those honorable Hours, it will be sufficient to state the enactment of new penal statutes—should there be any, and the nature and the amount of the new taxes, of which we yet conceive there will be not a few.

On of genius are invited to send their productions to THE PRESS, which is open for fair discussion on Public Subjects,—it will disdain to direct its digits at lesser game. Scurrility and defamation never has admission and shall be [illegible] which ought to be held sacred to Silence and into the circle of private life, would be a very unfair and licentious act; if there are reptiles amongst us, the Public have this sensation in perspective, " That shoe-lace in which " they crawl, already begins to stifle about " them; it will first deprive them of motion, " then of life, and the next gale that arises may " sweep them away with the dust in which they " perished."

From the torpor which has generalized over the Press for some time past, the surest and most cruel distinctions have been avoided. Amongst proof of the degraded state to which this great Palladium of public liberty has been reduced, cannot be mentioned than this, that the following ingenious Letter was offered for publication and not attended to.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PRESS.

SIR,

A day or two ago, a Hawker put a Pamphlet into my hands, with the following title, on the outside of the pamphlet, "A Dialogue between Corneille and Voltaire" Observations on a late Address to the Citizens of Dublin with a Letter to Mr. Pitt, with the same world and numerous an century, The [illegible] of Pamphlets and abundance of words, the same example of effect, the same affection of strange and rare of diction, [illegible] have [illegible] [illegible] Pamphlet [illegible] Pamphlet [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

delivered over to the executioner, with the double odium upon their memory of having been at once dupes and conspirators.

When all their secrets were betrayed, all their measures known, and all their leaders seized, the United Irishmen allowed the Rebellion to begin. It had been too long languishing and uncertain to inspire the people with confidence or enthusiasm; it was ill concerted, worse directed, received with coldness by some and terror by others; there was division between its leaders, there was disunion amongst its followers; it had neither guidance nor support. In fact, it might have been said to have been dead before its birth, had not the government forced it into premature existence by the stimulants of whipping and free quarters.

The terrible convulsion which ensued exhibited all the passions of the past history exploding in one burst of irrepressible violence. "Woe to the vanquished" was never so fearfully exhibited as the rule of war. But the history of this sickening period enters not into the purpose of this introduction: our duty has been simply to show the circumstances which produced that state of Ireland in which the United Irishmen moved and acted, and thus to explain how far the circumstances by which they were surrounded influenced their motives and their conduct.

* * * *

CHAPTER II.

"The Whiteboy" Associations—persecution of the Catholic Clergy and Gentry of the South on pretence of Whiteboyism —The case of the Sheehys, Buxton, and Farrell.

The various outbreaks of popular discontent which took place between 1760 and 1790, and got the names of insurrections and Popish rebellions, can only be regarded as agrarian outrages, the result of oppressive measures taken for the collection of exorbitant rents, the exaction of tithes, and the conversion of the small holdings of the peasantry into pastures. The destitution attendant on those measures, and especially the latter practice, in a country where the unfortunate people turned adrift had no manufacturing districts to fly to for the means of support, drove the persons thus beggared and deprived of house and home, to those acts of violence and desperation which usually follow in the footsteps of distress and ignorance. The same interests which reduced the people to misery were exerted in representing their condition as the result of their own turbulent

This introduction was written by William Cooke Taylor, LL D. (1800-1849). R.R.M.

and lawless proceedings, and the conduct of any of the gentry of their own persuasion who sympathised with their sufferings, or dared to attempt to redress their wrongs, as influenced by seditious and disaffected motives. Wherever agrarian outrages were committed, and their causes were inquired into by such persons, the landlords and the tithe-owners never failed to raise a clamour against their character for loyalty; and even the writers of the day, who ventured to espouse the cause of the parties who had the courage and humanity to interfere on behalf of the unfortunate people, represented their advocates as well-meaning "but giddy and officious men."

The conduct was thus designated of a Roman Catholic priest of the name of Sheehy, a man of unblemished character, and the memory of whose virtues even to this day is held in the highest veneration in the place where he was most foully murdered, and the name of law desecrated by the formal sanction of his death.

He was said to be inimical to the collection of church-rates in the parish of Newcastle,* where there were no parishioners, and was suspected of holding seditious opinions with respect to the divine right of a clergy to the tenth part of the produce of a half-starved people, whose souls they had no cure of. For these offences they persecuted to the death a minister of the gospel, who had neither offended against its law nor against the laws of his country.

Mr. Arthur Young, an Englishman, and an eye-witness of the Munster tumults, plainly attributes these disturbances to the inhuman conduct of landlords. "The landlord of an Irish estate", he says, "inhabited by Roman Catholics, is a sort of despot, who yields obedience in whatever concerns the poor to no law but that of his will".†

The flame of resistance to their oppression, he states, was kindled by "severe treatment in respect of tithes, united with a great speculative rise of rents about the same time. The atrocious acts they (the Whiteboys) were guilty of made them the objects of general indignation. Acts were passed for their punishment which seemed calculated for the meridian of Barbary. This arose to such a height, that by one (law) they were to be hanged, under certain circumstances, without the common formality of a trial, which, though repealed the following session, marks the spirit of punishment; while others remain yet the law of the land, that would tend more to raise than quell an insurrection".

Another English writer, Dr. Campbell, in his "Philosophical Survey of the South of Ireland", speaks of the country at the time he wrote, 1777, "instead of being in a progress-

* He had succeeded in abolishing them in the parish of Newcastle, and from his time to the present they have been unknown there.

† Young's "Tour", vol. ii., pages 40 and 42.

ive state of improvement, as verging to depopulation; the inhabitants are either moping under the sullen gloom of inactive indigence, or blindly asserting the rights of nature in nocturnal insurrections, attended with circumstances of ruinous devastation and savage cruelty; and must we not conclude that there are political errors somewhere ?" After detailing the causes of Whiteboyism, he adds, "What measures have been taken for laying this spirit ? None that I hear of, but that of offering rewards for apprehensions and discoveries. This evil must nevertheless originate from some other cause than mere depravity of nature; for, to suppose that a set of people should conspire to run the risk of being hanged and gibbeted for the mere pleasure of doing mischief to their neighbours, would argue a degree of diabolism not to be found in the human heart".*

The best, and by far the most clear and explicit account of the cause of those agrarian disturbances, is to be found in a pamphlet rarely to be met with, printed in Dublin in 1762, under the title of "An Enquiry into the Causes of the Outrages committed by the Levellers or Whiteboys of Munster, by M—— S——, Esq."

"Some landlords", says the author, "in Munster have set their lands to cottiers far above their value; and, to lighten their burden, allowed commonage to their tenants by way of recompense: afterwards, in despite of all equity, contrary to all compacts, the landlords enclosed these commons, and precluded their unhappy tenants from the only means of making their bargains tolerable. The law, indeed, is open to redress them; but they do not know the laws, or how to proceed; or if they did know them, they are not equal to the expense of a suit against a rich tyrant. Besides, the greatest part of these tenures are by verbal agreement, not by written compact. Here is another difficulty: if these wretches should apply to law, what could they do in this case ? They were too ignorant of the principles of equity to seek a reasonable redress: they had too deep a sense of their sufferings to feel the less pungent call of virtue; nay, they thought equity was on their side, and iniquity on the part of their landlords, and thence flew with eagerness to what is ever the resource of low and uncultivated minds—violence. * *

"It is not uncommon in Munster to charge from four to five guineas per acre for potato ground; but we shall suppose the price four guineas, that is, ninety-one shillings: the daily

* Dr. Campbell's "Philosophical Survey", pages 193-297.
Campbell's work is a suppositious record of a tour made by an Englishman in the South of Ireland, and gives a description of the chief towns. Sundry remarks on the trade of the country are interjected, and a political and commercial union with England is prescribed as a panacea for all Ireland's ills.

wages for labourers is four pence per day: there are three hundred and sixty-five days in the year, of which fifty-two are Sundays, and suppose but thirteen holidays, the remainder is three hundred working days, the wages for which is a hundred shillings, that is, nine shillings above the price of their land, of which five shillings are paid for the tithe, and two for hearth money; and the remainder goes towards the rent of their cabin. What is left ? Nothing. And out of this nothing, they are to buy seed for their garden, salt for their potatoes, and rags for themselves, their wives, and children. It must be observed that in this calculation I have mentioned three hundred working days, though it is known, from the greater number of holidays observed in that part of the kingdom than in any other, from the number of wet and broken days, joined with the natural laziness of the people, there are not about two hundred days for which they are paid. What an aggravation does this make in the account. And will the best crop enable them to maintain a family, often of six or eight persons, under the difficulties we have mentioned ? It is this exorbitant rent which produces the complaint of tithes. Ready money they have not; the reward of their labour goes in payment of their rent; they can seldom amass the mighty sum of two shillings to pay their hearth money; how then can they collect five shillings for tithes ? The clergymen in that country possess livings which have a thousand acres under black cattle. Here the incumbent gets nothing, and the cottier's garden becomes his principal support. A gentleman of birth, perhaps piety and learning, is brought to the disagreeable necessity of chaffering with a set of poor wretches for two pence, or six pence, in a bargain, or forego the support of his own family. This business grows irksome to him, and he seeks some one person who will take the whole trouble upon him. The distress of the parishioner is heightened by this agreement; and the tithe-monger, who is generally more rapacious than humane, squeezing out the very vitals of the people, and by process, citation, and sequestration, drags from them the little which the landlord and king had left them ".

If the landlords of Ireland had been in alliance with France, and bent upon promoting its views in the former country, by rendering the people more discontented, they could not have done more for French policy than they thus effected by driving the people to desperation.

These were the real rebels to the British Crown, and the worst enemies of all to the connection that ought to have subsisted with mutual good will between the two countries.

In 1760, a variety of causes had conspired to reduce the people to the lowest degree of misery. The revenue, the unerring barometer of their condition, plainly indicated in

this year the distress that universally prevailed; a fatal disease swept off vast quantities of their cattle, and provisions became unusually dear. The distress was not sudden or partial; it had gone on increasing for the past five years. The House of Commons, in their address to his Excellency, on referring to this subject, and to the want of corn to which the distress of the country was largely to be attributed, declared "they would most cheerfully embrace every practicable method to promote tillage".

The members of that House kept the word of promise to the Viceroy's ears, and broke it to the people's hope. The Parliament being mainly composed of landlords, scandalously embraced the opportunity of promoting their own temporary interests by turning the tilled lands of vast districts into pasturages, and even enclosing the commons where their impoverished tenants had hitherto been permitted to graze their cattle, and by such means had been enabled to meet the landlords' and the tithe owners' exorbitant demands.

When a famishing peasantry ceases to look upon the lords of the soil as their natural protectors, and they regard the law without respect, because it is administered by men "who grind the faces of the poor", their outrages, it will be found by melancholy experience, are more violent, ungovernable, driftless, and vindictive in their character than those that are excited by any other species of oppression.

So it was with the lawless acts of the Whiteboys, wanton in cruelty, wild in their schemes, and heedless of the consequences arising from the destruction of property; and so it always will be with the turbulence of a people who have been trampled upon by the proprietors of the soil, as those of Ireland had been. The proprietors cared, in fact, no more for their miserable tenants than the bashaws of Turkey are wont to do for the Christian rajahs of the distant provinces, which are delivered into their hands, to be ruled over with a rod of iron, to have the last para wrung from their labour, for the benefit of strangers to the soil, and of ulemas in Stamboul, from whose functions they derive no earthly or spiritual advantages.

Lord Northumberland, addressing the Parliament in 1763, in speaking of the disorders in the south, intimated that the means of industry would be the remedy; from whence it followed, the want of those means must have been the cause. The Commons, in accordance with the Viceroy's suggestion, promised to give their best attention to the Protestant Charter Schools, and Linen Manufacture. The people, it was well known, would not send their children to the former, and were totally ignorant of the latter. In fact, when the Catholic people were crying out for bread, the Commons were proposing Protestant schools for the starving children

of a Roman Catholic population, and shuttles and looms for an agricultural peasantry.

The landlords in the House of Commons carried out the views on which they acted in their several districts; they declared the riots which had taken place in 1762 and 1763, to be "Popish rebellions". They appointed a committee "to inquire into the causes and progress of the Popish insurrection in the province of Munster".

In 1764, the Lords and Commons, in their address to the Viceroy, the Earl of Northumberland, characterized the acts of the rioters as, "Treason against the state". In their "pretended grievances no traces of oppression can be seen; we can only impute their disorders to the artful contrivances of designing men, who, from selfish and interested views, have spread this licentious spirit among the people".

The Government, on the other hand, sent down a commission into the disturbed districts in 1762, consisting of men of eminence in the law, and of known ability, and impartiality, to report upon the character of those tumultuous risings, and the result of their inquiry may be gathered from a paragraph in the London Gazette of May, 1762, wherein it is stated, "that the authors of those riots consisted indiscriminately of persons of different persuasions, and that no marks of disaffection to his Majesty's person or government appeared in any of those people".

On the other hand partisan historians were not found wanting in boldly asserting that the riots in Munster were "Popish" plots, and it is notorious that Francis Plowden in "Strictures upon a Historical Review of the State of Ireland". 8vo., London, 1804, does not scruple to deliberately falsify historical documentary evidence.

In 1766, the unfortunate people having paid the penalty of "their crimes and their pretended grievances", having been dealt with according to law, the country was restored to that kind of quiet which usually follows terror, and in Ireland passes for tranquillity. The landlords then had leisure, and a colourable pretext in their own exaggerated representations of the treasonable designs of the quelled rioters, to bring all those Roman Catholic gentry to an account who were known to have afforded any pecuniary assistance to the miserable wretches who had been thrown into gaol or brought to trial, and were without the means of making any defence, except what they obtained from the charity of those of their own communion who were thus far able to assist them. An expression of sympathy with their unfortunate condition, a single act of interference in their behalf before a justice of the peace, or the appearance at the trial of one of them as a witness, and it will be seen, even as a legal adviser of the party accused, was sufficient to bring

the loyalty of every such person into question, to compromise his character, and to put his life in peril.

The turpitude of involving men in the crimes of those they succoured in a gaol, which the law allowed, but which they were unable to provide, did not originate with the persecutors of the Sheehys, the Farrells, the Buxtons, and the Keatings of 1766; nor did the baseness of the practice terminate with the troubled time they lived in. In 1798, the same principle was not only acted on by Magistrates, but the Lord Chancellor of Ireland gave the sanction of his authority to the execrable doctrine, that the act of contribution towards the defraying the expense incurred for the defence of persons accused of treason involved a participation in the crime.

This was one of the charges in the report of the Secret Committee of 1793, drawn up by the Lord Chancellor, which was hung, in terrorem, over the heads of some members of the Catholic Committee. One of these gentlemen, Mr. John Sweetman, was especially pointed out as a person in criminal communication with the Defenders, and the only proof of his criminality was a letter, in which mention was made of some steps that had been taken towards assisting the brother of a Roman Catholic gentleman of the name of Nugent, who had been committed to goal on a charge of defenderism. The report of the Committee stated, that although the body of the Roman Catholics were not privy to this application of the money levied on them, the conduct, however, was suspicious, "of ill-disposed individuals of their persuasion resident in Dublin".*

The government had previously sent to Sweetman, as Secretary of the Catholics, to inform him, the publication of the report of the Secret Committee would endanger his life, and offered, if he avowed his indiscretion, the report would be quashed. And we are informed by Emmet, in his "Essay towards the History of Ireland", that Sweetman refused to do so.

The same accusation of contributing towards the defence of prisoners charged with treasonable practices, who were his own tenants, was brought against the unfortunate Sir Edward Crosbie, and this prima facie evidence of disaffection weighed down every proof of innocence, for every other charge carried with it its own self-evident refutation, and an act of Christian charity was made mainly instrumental to his ignominious death.

If these were solitary instances of a practice founded on a condemnation of the common dictates of humanity, it would have been needless to advert to them; but unfortunately there are too many of them on record in the criminal

* Report of Lords' Secret Committee, 1793, Appendix, No. 1, p. 3.

proceedings of those times to allow them to be passed over, or to render it unnecessary to make the remembrance of them a bar to their recurrence. We surely need no stronger argument to convince us, that if the unfortunate country which is delivered up to civil war, were not forsaken by the spirit of Christianity, such infamous doctrines could not have been put forth.

The language of our rulers in Ireland has been: your brethern are poor and oppressed, but you shall not pity them; they are in prison, but it shall be treason for you to go to them; they are naked and open to their enemies, but you shall not succour them. They have been hungry and thirsty, and we have not given them to eat or to drink; and as we have not suffered them to murmur against us, neither shall you sympathize with them, unless you are willing to share in the punishment which is prepared for traitors and their accomplices.

General descriptions of popular tumults and of calamitous occurences often convey a less accurate idea of the events in question, than the particular details of the fate or sufferings of one of those actors or victims in the strife, whose history is bound up with the events that excite our interest.

The account of the persecution and judicial murder of Father Nicholas Sheehy, of Clogheen, is an epitome in itself of the history of Ireland at that period, of its persecuted people, of the character of their oppressors, of the divisions secretly encouraged and sedulously fostered by the rulers of the country between one class of the community and another, and, finally, of the use made of the weakness consequent on the general disunion.

In 1762, the Earl (subsequently Marquis) of Drogheda, was sent to the disturbed districts in the province of Munster, in command of a considerable military force, and fixed his head quarters at Clogheen, in the county of Tipperary. The Whiteboys were at that period in the habit of assembling in large bodies, generally by night, and committing depredations on the properties of those obnoxious to them. On the night of the day on which the Marquis arrived at Clogheen, one of those assemblages took place in the neighbourhood, with the intention, it was believed, of assaulting the town. A clergyman of the name of Doyle, parish priest of Ardfinnan, on learning their intention, one of the informers states in his depositions, went among them, and succeeded in preventing them carrying their project into effect. His purpose, however, in so doing, as usual, was represented as insidious.

From that time the Earl of Drogheda made several incursions into the adjacent country, "and great numbers of the insurgents were", we are informed by Sir Richard Musgrave, "killed by his lordship's regiment, and French

money was found in the pockets of some of them". This assertion is strenuously opposed by Curry and O'Connor; and in one of the letters of Lord Charlemont, published in Hardy's memoirs of his lordship,* mention is made of the attention of the Custom-House officers of Dublin being directed to the circumstance of "a very considerable number of French crowns having been received at the Custom-House, which could not have been the result of trade, since little or no specie is imported from France in exchange for our commodities".

Sir Richard Musgrave states that a Mr. Conway, an Irish resident at Paris, was in the habit of remitting money to the insurgents on the part of the French government. This statement rests on his authority, valeat quod valeat. Lord Charlemont, however, is far from ascribing the real causes of those disturbances to French gold or intrigue.† "Misery, oppression, and famine—these were undoubtedly the first and original causes". And he adds, "I will not pretend to attest that French intrigue may not sometimes have interfered to aggravate and inflame the fever already existing".

Mr. Matthew O'Connor speaks of the "circulation of French coin as the natural result of a smuggling intercourse with France, and in particular of the clandestine export of wool to that country".‡

While the Earl of Drogheda continued at Clogheen, the troops were constantly employed in the old mode of "pacifying" the country, and some of the gentlemen in the neighbouring districts were in the habit of scouring the country at the head of armed parties. The gentlemen who chiefly distinguished themselves in these military exploits were William Bagnell, Esq., Sir Thomas Maude, and John Bagwell, Esq. The exertions of these gentlemen in their military and magisterial pursuits were actively seconded in the arrangement of the panel at the assizes by Daniel Toler, Esq., High Sheriff of the county, an ancestor of the judge celebrated for his judicial energy at another calamitous period of Irish history, and in the getting up of the prosecutions by a minister of the gospel, the Rev. John Hewetson.

While the head quarters of the Earl of Drogheda were fixed at Clogheen, the services of the usual auxiliaries to the Irish magistracy were called into requisition. No Roman Catholic leader of any respectability had been yet fixed on to give a plausible character to the rumour of a Popish insurrection; the parish priest of the town was accordingly suspected of disaffection. He had collected money for the

* "Memoirs of the Earl of Charlemont", vol. i. p. 175; Sir Richard Musgrave's "Memoirs of the Rebellion", etc. p. 54.

† "Memoirs of the Earl of Charlemont", p. 174.

‡ "History of the Irish Catholics", by M. O'Connor, p. 288.

defence of some of the rioters who were his parishioners, and the acquittal of any of them was attributed to his interference. Father Nicholas Sheehy was born at Fethard, about six miles from Clonmel. He was sent to France at an early age to receive that education which it was a capital offence to communicate to one of his creed at home. He was well descended, and related to some of the most respectable Catholic gentlemen of the country. A man of the name of John Bridge, having been arrested on a charge of Whiteboyism, examined by torture, and "severely punished by court martial", was induced to come forward with charges against several respectable persons of having been amongst the rioters who had assembled in the neighbourhood of the town, the night of the day on which Lord Drogheda arrived at Clogheen. A woman of abandoned character, who had been excommunicated by Father Sheehy, was likewise procured, at a latter period, to swear to an information of a similar tendency to Bridge's. Sheehy was arrested, but the evidence against him could not have been very conclusive, for after his examination he was suffered to go at large on the understanding that he was to appear if further evidence was brought against him in corroboration of the informers. The proceedings against Father Sheehy remained thus suspended, when, in the latter end of 1763, Bridge disappeared, and a report was circulated that he had been murdered by the Whiteboys. In March, 1764, the high Sheriff and grand jury of the county of Tipperary published an advertisement, setting forth, "That whereas the said John Bridge was missing since October preceding, and was supposed to be murdered, they did hereby promise a reward of £50 to any person or persons who should discover, within twelve calendar months, any person or persons concerned in said act", etc.

The advertisement soon produced the desired effect. The only persons concerned in the appearance or non-appearance of the informer were those who had been informed against. Father Sheehy was not named in the advertisement, but it was impossible that any doubt could be entertained as to the party interested in the disappearance of the informer, and therefore to be suspected of being privy to his murder.

The magistrates and gentry of Tipperary had been incensed against the judge who presided at the preceding trials of the rioters. One of the few impartial and humane judges who then graced the Irish bench, Sir Richard Acton, Lord Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, had been sent upon a special commission to try a great number of these rioters two years previously. The trials were conducted with a show of justice that was extremely offensive to the local authorities, and the magistrates and grand jury raised such a clamour against the excellent judge, that he was driven

from the Irish bench, and went to England, where he accepted of the inferior appointment of puisne judge. The name of Sir Richard Acton deserves to be remembered in Ireland with respect and honour; and if no other eulogy on his character were recorded, it might be sufficient to say, that this Fletcher of his day was reviled by Sir Richard Musgrave, and that on the occasion of his return from Clonmel at the conclusion of the business of the special commission, the road along which he passed was lined on both sides with men, women, and children, thanking him for the justice and the fairness of his conduct in the discharge of his duty, and pouring blessings on him as a just and impartial judge.*

This was a novel spectacle in Ireland: it was a touching exhibition, and one, it might be considered, that might have moved the pity and softened the rancour of the enemies of these poor people. But justice and humanity were hateful to their oppressors, and the administration of the law under the influence of either was a course they could not comprehend or tolerate. In the clamour that was raised against this upright judge, it is painful to find the great champion of popular rights (as the celebrated Dr. Lucas was deemed) taking an active part in his place in Parliament against the administration of justice and the judicial authorities, on account of the leniency exhibited on the trials of the Popish rioters. On the 13th of October, 1763, in moving an instruction to the committee to inquire into the causes of the insurrections of the south, he expressed his amazement "that the indictments in the south were only laid for a riot and a breach of the peace, while those in the north were all laid for high treason, and animadverted severely on the conduct of the judges who sat in the south".

The brawling patriot, who was wont to make the walls of parliament reverberate with the thunder of his indignation when one of its privileges was endangered, could stand up in that house, raise his voice in condemnation of measures of humanity, when the unfortunate people stood in the utmost need of pity and protection.

He was replied to by the Solicitor-General, who said, he was surprised at the speech of the honourable gentleman. "Several of the indictments had been laid for high treason in the south, as well as the north, and several had been executed upon the statute; but wherever lenity had been shown, it was only where reason and humanity required it".*

* Plowden's "History of Ireland", col. ii., page 139.

On August 9th, 1764, a proclamation was issued against "several wicked and disorderly persons styled Whiteboys".

Public Record Office, Dublin.

* "Irish Debates", in the years 1763 and 1764, vol. i. p. 48.

Before entering upon the further proceedings against the Rev. Father Sheehy, it was necessary to show the state of public feeling, not only in the disturbed district in which he resided, but even in the House of Commons, on the subject of those agrarian disturbances.

Between the period of Bridge's disappearance and the spring of 1764, Father Sheehy was constantly menaced with prosecution; witnesses were frequently examined and indictments framed, but no criminal proceedings followed.

At length, in the early part of 1765, he found his persecutors so bent on his destruction, that it became necessary for him to secrete himself. The government had been prevailed upon to issue a proclamation against him, in which he was described as a fugitive from justice, charged with high treason, and offering a reward of £300 for his apprehension.[1] Sheehy no sooner was informed of the proclamation than he wrote to Mr. Secretary Waite, acquainting him "that he would save the government the reward offered for taking him, by surrendering himself out of hand to be tried for any crime he was accused of, not at Clonmel (where he feared the power and malice of his enemies were too prevalent for justice), but in the Court of King's Bench in Dublin"; and accordingly he delivered himself up to Cornelius O'Callaghan, Esq., of whom the present Lord Lismore is the grand-nephew.

Several of the preceding details are to be found in a pamphlet called "A Candid Inquiry into the Causes and Motives of the late Riots in the Province of Munster"; and, as appears by a subsequent pamphlet by the same author, Dr. Curry (a parallel between the pretended plot of 1762, and the forgery of Titus Oates in 1679), was written in the month of May, 1766.

Speaking of this pamphlet, the venerable Charles O'Connor states that no notes of the trials were taken at the time, and that it is only to this account of the proceedings, and the declarations solemnly made of the victims, that we can refer for information that can give an insight into the proceedings against them. Such, however, is not the fact;

1. Proclamation dated February, 13th, 1765. Public Record Office, Dublin.

There is a letter in the Irish Record Office from Mr. Waite, the Secretary at the Castle, to Father Sheehy, dated March, 5th, 1765, which says :—"Yesterday I received your letter from Ballyporeen with the two papers indorsed therein, and having laid the same before the Lords Justices, their Excellencies have commanded me to acquaint you that if you will surrender yourself to Mr. O'Callaghan you may depend upon his receiving and treating you with all civility, and that you will be by him transmitted in the most private manner to Dublin, with the utmost security and safety to your person. I write to him for that purpose this night by order of the Lords Justices, and you may be assured that upon your arrival here you will meet, not only the justice you desire, but with such further regard as your candid behaviour may deserve".

notes of some of those trials do exist, and from them and the records of the Crown Office of Clonmel, and the original information sworn against the parties, which I discovered there, the following details are given.

The Dublin Gazette, of 15th March, 1765, announces that, "About eight o'clock on Wednesday night, Nicholas Sheehy, a Popish priest, charged with being concerned in several treasonable practices to raise a rebellion in this kingdom, for the apprehending of whom government offered a reward of £300, was brought to town guarded by a party of light horse, and lodged by the Provost in the Lower Castle Yard". It was not till the 10th of February, in the following year, that he was brought to trial in the Court of King's Bench. The Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, then, was the Right Honourable John Gore; Second Justice, Mr. Christopher Robinson; Third Justice, William Scott, Esq. The indictment charged the prisoner with acting as a leader in a treasonable conspiracy, exercising men under arms, swearing them allegiance to the French King, and inciting them to rebellion. The witnesses produced were, a man of the name of John Toohy, who had been committed to Kilkenny gaol on a charge of horse-stealing, a month previously to his examination having been given in against the prisoner; a woman of the name of Mary Butler; and a vagrant boy of the name of Lonnergan.

It would be difficult to comprehend the nature or extent of the wickedness exhibited in these proceedings, without referring to the circumstances which rendered Sheehy and others more obnoxious to the magisterial conspirators than the persons of his persuasion in the neighbourhood who had the good fortune to escape being similarly implicated. The enclosing of commonage in the neighbourhood of Clogheen in the winter of 1761-2, had inflicted much injury on the parishioners of Father Sheehy.

About that time the tithes of two Protestant clergymen, Messrs. Foulkes and Sutton, in the vicinity of Ballyporeen, were rented to a tithe proctor of the name of Dobbyn. The tithe farmer instituted in 1762 a new claim on the Roman Catholic people in his district of five shillings for every marriage celebrated by a priest. On what grounds this claim was put forward I have not been able to ascertain, but the fact of its having been preferred and levied admits of no doubt.* This new impost was resisted by the people, and, as it fell heavily on the poor parishioners of Father Sheehy, he denounced it publicly.

* The above-named fact and many others connected with the private history of the persons referred to in this Memoir, were communicated to me by one of the oldest inhabitants of Clogheen, one most thoroughly acquainted with those times and their events, Mr. Jeremiah M'Grath, a land surveyor, a relative of one of the persons persecuted and repeatedly prosecuted, Roger Sheehy. R. R. M.

The first "risings" in his neighbourhood were connected with their resistance to this odious tax, where there was no congregation, was likewise resisted by the people, and there is no doubt but their resistance to it was encouraged by Father Sheehy. On some occasions, when the parishioners assembled for the purpose of revising some means of protection against the extortions of tithe proctors, Father Sheehy was present and took part in their discussions. These discussions, it is needless to say, they dared not hold in public; but, private as they were, they were well known to the real conspirators in Clonmel. Father Sheehy was a bold and fearless advocate of justice and humanity, a man whose misfortune it was, in times like those, to be gifted with a generous disposition, and to be animated with a hatred of oppression. But the very qualities which rendered him obnoxious to the enemies of the poor persecuted people, left him naked and open to their enmity. He was courageous and confiding, chivalrous in defence of the poor and the oppressed, but incautiously prominent in the struggle, and heedless of the power and the wickedness of his enemies.

The various informations and indictments show plainly enough, differing, as they do, in the most material particulars, yet concurring in one point, the influence of Sheehy over his parishioners, that his prosecutors were casting about them at random for evidence of any kind or character that might rid them of the annoyance of a man of an independent mind, and by his implication give additional colour to the pretended Popish plot.

For several months previously to Mr. Sheehy's surrender, he had been in concealment, flying from house to house, of such of his parishioners as he could confide in. He had been frequently obliged to change his abode to avoid the rigorous searches that were almost daily made for him. At length, terror and corruption had exerted such an influence over his own flock that he hardly knew whom to trust, or in whose house to seek an asylum. Indeed it is impossible to wade through the mass of informations sworn to against him by persons of his own persuasion, without wondering at the extent and the successfulness of the villainy that was practised against him. His last place of refuge at Clogheen was in the house of a small farmer, a Protestant, of the name of Griffiths, adjoining the churchyard of Shandrahan, where his remains now lie. The windows of this house open into the churchyard, and there Father Sheehy was concealed for three days, hid during the day in a vault in the latter place, and during the night in the house, when it was necessary to keep up a large fire, so benumbed with cold he used to be when brought at nightfall from the place that was indeed his living tomb. The house is still standing, and

inhabited by the grandson of his faithful friend, and one of his own creed it is to be remembered. The last service rendered to him at Clogheen was likewise by a Protestant, a gentleman in the commission of the peace, Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan, to whom he surrendered himself. This gentleman gave him one of his horses to convey him to Dublin, and the sum of ten guineas to bear his expenses.

Mr. O'Callaghan's high rank, his character for loyalty, his position in society, were not sufficient to secure him from the malignity of his magisterial conspirators. Mr. O'Callaghan was denounced by Bagwell as a suspected person. Lord James Cahir, the ancestor of Lord Glengall, was likewise declared to be on the black list of this gentleman, and of his associate, the Rev. James Hewetson ; both these gentlemen had to fly the country to save their lives, and the noblemen who are their successors would do well to remember how necessary it is to keep the administration of justice in pure hands, that rapacious villainy may be discomfited in its attempts to promote its interests by the inculpation of men who have broad lands and local influence to be deprived of by convictions and confiscations.

One of the earliest charges of Whiteboyism brought against him stands thus recorded in the indictment and information book in the Crown Office:*—

"Nicholas Sheehy, bailed in £2,000; Denis Keane, £1,090; Nicholas Dogherty, £1,000. A true bill. Clonmel General Assizes, May 23, 1763, before Right Hon. Warden Flood and Hon. William Scott. Nicholas Sheehy, a Popish priest, bound over in court last assizes, trial then put off by the Court, indicted for that he, with divers others ill-disposed persons and disturbers of the peace, on the second day of March, in the second year of the reign of George III., at Scarlap, did unlawfully assemble and assult William Ross, and did wickedly compel him to swear that he would never discover anything to the prejudice of the Whiteboys, etc. William Ross, bound over in £100, estreated; James Ross, £100, estreated.

The Rosses of Garrymore were Roman Catholics of the middle rank, and had rendered themselves obnoxious to the people at the commencement of these agrarian disturbances by enclosing commonage adjoining their lands at Romlemmon.

A party of levellers had broken down the fences with which they had enclosed these commons, but whether the persons engaged in this act were parishioners of Father Sheehy, or had received any encouragement from him, or

* Once for all I have to state that the above document, and all the others of a similar kind, which are here given, were collected by myself, and copied from the original official documents in the Crown Office of Clonmel. R. R. M.

whether the charge was brought forward from private resentment, or at the instigation of Sheehy's persecutors, have no means of knowing. It is clear, however, from the forfeiture of their recognizances, that they had taken a step they repented of, or were not able to follow up.* Sheehy was evidently ignorant of this proceeding of theirs, for on his trial he called on one of the Rosses to prove that he had slept at their house the night that Bridge was said to have been murdered, and on his examination the fact was denied by him. Every step in this nefarious persecution is marked with perfidy of more than ordinary baseness.

The custom of first "presenting" a Popish priest in those times, and then trumping up charges of sedition, and encouragement of agrarian outrages, was in full force at this period. Sheehy had been thus "presented" before any other charge was brought against him.

At the same assizes at which the first bill was found against him, a true bill was likewise found against Michael Quinlan, a Popish priest, for having, at Aghnacarty and other places, exercised the office and functions of a Popish priest against the peace and statute, etc.

To make the surety of conviction doubly sure, as in Sheehy's case, a second indictment was sent up on the same occasion, charging him with "riotously assembling at Aghnacarty against the peace", on the same day as named in the former indictment.

At the General Assizes at Clonmel, on the 23rd May, 1763, a number of persons were indicted, charged with Whiteboy offences, and amongst them we find the names of the witnesses who were made the main supporters of the Bagnell, Maude, and Bagwell conspiracy, or, as they term it, the Popish plot. The following persons were then tried and acquitted: Tim Guinan; John, Michael, Daniel, and James Lonnergan. Two of the Lonnergans were the nephews of Guinan, a hackler, lads between the ages of fifteen and seventeen; one of them John Lonnergan, was the witness on whose evidence the managers mainly relied for convictions in the subsequent trials. This boy was an idle vagrant, noted in his neighbourhood for his vicious habits. He was produced on the trials dressed out for the occasion in a long outside coat, for the purpose of causing him to look taller and older than he was.

At the Clonmel Summer Assizes of 1764, Nicholas Sheehy was again indicted, and seven other persons out on bail were

* At a little distance from the grave of Father Sheehy, the Rosses lie buried in the churchyard of Shandrahan. The inscription on their tombstone states that James Ross (the father) died in 1765. William died in 1787. The nephew of the latter treated the successor of Father Sheehy in Clogheen with great violence, not long after which he was thrown from his horse and killed on the spot.

included in the same indictment, wherein it set forth, "that they on the 6th of January, in the fourth year of the king's reign, at Shanbally, did assault John Bridge, against the peace".

At the same Assizes, a true bill was found against Edward Meehan, Nicholas Sheehan, Nicholas Lee, John Magan, John Butler, and Edmund Burke, charging them with "compassing rebellion at Clogheen, on the 7th March, and 6th October, second year of the king, and unlawfully assembling in white shirts, in arms, when they did traitorously prepare, ordain, and levy war against the king"; and bound to appear as witnesses, Michael Guinan, Thomas Lonnergan, and Mary Butler.

On the 19th November, 1764, Denis Brien, of Ballyporeen, was bound over before Mr. Cornelius O'Callaghan, to appear at the following assizes, "to answer all things brought against him by Michael Guinan, John Bridge, or any other person, concerning the late disturbances".

The number of informations sworn to against all the leading Catholic gentry of the country by the Lonnergans, Guinan, Toohy, a horse-stealer, and two abandoned women of the names of Butler and Dunlea, between the years, 1763 and 1767, would fill a good-sized volume. The names of the magistrates before whom these informations, in almost every instance, were sworn, were John Bagwell, Thomas Maude, and the Rev. J. Hewetson.

At the General Assizes held at Clonmel the 16th March, 1765, before Chief Baron Willes and Mr. Justice Tennison, the following bills found at the former assizes were brought before the Grand Jury. Some of the trials were put off, all the parties were admitted to bail, or allowed to stand out on heavy recognizances, and the names of the persons who bailed the prisoners are deserving of notice; for it will be found, that to enter into securities for a man marked out for ruin by the Clonmel conspirators, was to draw down the vengeance of these conspirators on those who dared to come forward as witnesses, and stand between the victims and their persecutors.

I doubt if anything more terribly iniquitous than the proceedings which I have traced in these official records is to be met with in the history of any similar conspiracy.

The High Sheriff in 1765 was Sir Thomas Maude, the foreman of the grand jury, Richard Pennefather, Esq. The following are the persons named as having been formerly indicted and held to bail :—

"Edmund Burke, of Tullow, bail £500; his sureties, George Everard, of Lisheenanoul, and James Butler, of Gurrane, County Cork.

Edward Meehan, Clogheen, £500; his sureties, Pierce Nagle, of Flemingstown; John Butler, of Mitchelstown;

James Hickey, of Frehans; John Bourk, of Rouska.

Nicholas Sheehy, surrendered; James Buxton, Patrick Condon, and Patrick Boar, out".

After the names of these persons, against whom true bills had been found, the proceedings are thus recorded :—

"Trial put off last Assizes on an affidavit of the prosecutor, bound over then in Court to appear. Record since removed by certiorari.

"Indicted, Spring Assizes, 1764, for that they, not having the fear of God before their eyes, nor the duty of their allegiance, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the devil, and departing from the true affection and natural obedience of our Lord the King, and intending, contriving, and conspiring to disquiet and disturb the peace of our said Lord and King, and all his liege subjects, on the 10th day of February, in the second year of the king, and at divers other times before and after, at Clogheen, falsely, unlawfully, devilishly, and traitorously did compass, imagine, and intend to raise and levy open war, insurrection, and rebellion; and in order to fulfil and bring to effect the treasons and intentions aforesaid, afterwards, to wit same day, year, and place, did traitorously and seditiously assemble together, with two hundred other unknown persons, armed with guns, pistols, and other weapons, as well offensive as defensive, dressed in white apparel, did falsely, unlawfully, and traitorously prepare, begin, and levy public war against our said Lord the King, against the peace and statute.

MICHAEL GUINAN, £50,
Bailed in Court".

The preceding details sufficiently explain the views and objects of the prosecutors, and their temporary defeat by the terms entered into by Father Sheehy with Government, by which a trial in Dublin was secured to him.

The trial, which took place on the 10th of February, 1766, in the Court of King's Bench, was impartially conducted; the conduct of the "managers" who got up the evidence, at every turn of the testimony, bore on its face the evident marks of subornation of perjury. The vile witnesses broke down, and after a trial of fourteen hours' duration, the persecuted priest was honourably acquitted. He had redeemed his pledge to the Government, he had given himself up, stood his trial, and proved his innocence. But no sooner was the verdict pronounced, than the faith of Government was broken with him. The unfortunate man was informed by the Chief Justice that a charge of murder was brought against him, and on this charge he must be committed to Newgate. He was accordingly taken from the Dock, removed to the prison, and, after two or

three days' imprisonment, was put into the hands of his merciless persecutors, to be forthwith conveyed to Clonmel.

The first intimation of the new charge against him was given to him in Dublin, a few days previously to his trial, by a person named O'Brien, on account of his intelligence and prudence, had been chosen by the friends of the priest to accompany him to Dublin, and he gave some proof of his fitness for his appointment by strongly urging him, a few days previously to his trial, to quit the kingdom. Father Sheehy was then at large; he had been confined for a few days after his surrender in the Provost in the Castle Yard. He was placed under the charge of Major Joseph Sirr, then town-major, and father to the person of less enviable notoriety in the same office at a later period. His innocence was so manifest to Mr. Secretary Waite and to Major Sirr, that he was relieved from all restraint, and the latter held himself responsible for his appearance at the time appointed for his trial.

While he was at large he was informed by O'Brien that a person had brought him an account from Clonmel that no sooner had the news of Father Sheehy's surrender been received than a rumor got abroad that a charge of murder was to be brought against him. He recommended Father Sheehy not to lose a moment in getting out of the kingdom, and urgently pressed him to put himself the same day on board a packet for England.

O'Brien several years afterwards stated to my informant that Sheehy smiled at the proposal. He said they wanted to frighten him out of the country, but he would not gratify his enemies, and if they brought such a monstrous charge against him, he could easily disprove it. Sheehy's arrival in Dublin, it is to be borne in mind, was only five months after the alleged murder, and at the time of his departure from Clogheen, it is positively affirmed by Magrath, on the authority of O'Brien, that Father Sheehy had then no knowledge of the murder, and the probability is, that it was in Dublin a fugitive named Mahony, when about quitting the kingdom, had made the revelation to him.

Sheehy was conveyed on horse-back, under a strong military escort, to Clonmel, his arms pinioned, and his feet tied under the horse's belly. While in confinement in the gaol of Clonmel he was double bolted, and treated in every respect with the utmost rigour. In this condition he was seen by one of his old friends, and while this gentleman was condoling with him on his unfortunate condition, he pointed to his legs, which were ulcerated by the cords he had been bound with on his way from Dublin. He said, laughing, "Never mind, we will defeat these fellows"; and he struck up a verse of the old song of Shawn na guira.

On the 12th of March, 1766, Sheehy was put on his trial at Clonmel, for the murder of John Bridge. Most of the witnesses who gave evidence on the former trial were produced on this occasion.

Among the new witnesses was a woman of abandoned character, commonly known by the name of "Moll Dunlea", but introduced on the trial as Mrs. Mary Brady, the latter being the name of a soldier of the light horse, with whom she then cohabited.

Nicholas Sheehy was indicted on the charge of having been present at, and aiding and abetting Edmund Meighan in the murder of John Bridge. Mr. Sheehy had a sister, Mrs. Green, who resided at Shanbally, in the vicinity of Clogheen; and at this place, according to the evidence, the murder of Bridge, Lord Carrick, Mr. John Bagwell, Mr. William Bagnell, and other persons obnoxious to them, was first proposed by Mr. Sheehy to a numerous assemblage of Whiteboys; and by him all those present were sworn to secrecy, fidelity to the French king, and the commission of the proposed murders, and subsequently the murder was committed by one of the party, named Edmund Meighan, of Grange, in the month of October, 1764.

Sheehy and Meighan were tried separately. The same evidence for the prosecution was produced on both trials.

Several of Father Sheehy's parishioners offered to come forward as witnesses, to confute the witnesses who had so grossly perjured themselves on the former trial; but Father Sheehy, well knowing they would incur the vengeance of his prosecutors, and relying mainly on the testimony of two witnesses, Messrs. Keating and Herbert, whose characters he thought would secure them from any injury on his account, generously, but unfortunately for him, declined to have several of them called.

One person, indeed, of his own persuasion, his spiritual superior, the Rt. Rev. Dr. Egan, he did call on, to speak to his character as a man of loyalty, and this gentleman refused. The cold, dull shade of the Catholic aristocracy, the influence of the friendship of Lord Kenmare, the fear of the consequences attendant on the perjured informations, which went to implicate Dr. Butler, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Cashel, in the crime of treason, it is to be feared, prevented Dr. Egan from coming forward on behalf of a person who had the character of an agitating priest, one who was inimical to tithe proctors and the oppressors of the poor, and most obnoxious to the latter, and their powerful protectors in the commission of the peace.*

* After Sheehy's execution, the refusal of Dr. Egan was remembered and marked: as the corpse was borne past the house of Dr. E., the blood of the innocent man was sprinkled on his door.

The innocence of Father Sheehy was clearly established by one of the witnesses he produced, Mr. Keating, a Catholic gentleman of respectability and fortune, the excellence of whose character, in the words of Mr. O'Connor, formed a striking contrast with that of his prosecutors. But the most astounding act of wickedness that had been yet practised against the life of this doomed man was had recourse to, to deprive him of the advantage which the testimony of Mr. Keating must have been to him, had that testimony been allowed to go unimpeached.

"On the day of his (Sheehy's) trial", we are told by the same author, "a party of horse surrounded the court, admitting and excluding whom they thought proper while other of them, with a certain ——— (Baronet, Sir Thomas Maude) at their head, scampered the streets in a formidable manner, forcing their way into the inns and private lodgings in the town; challenging and questioning all new comers; menacing his friends, and encouraging his enemies. Even after sentence of death was pronounced against him, which one would think might have fully satisfied his enemies, Mr. S——w (Sparrow), his attorney, declares, that he found it necessary for his safety to steal out of the town by night, and with all possible speed to escape to Dublin".

The prisoner, Father Nicholas Sheehy, was found guilty of the murder of John Bridge, and sentenced to be hanged, drawn, and quartered; and on the 15th the sentence was carried into execution at Clonmel. The head of the murdered priest was stuck on a spike, and placed over the porch of the old gaol, and there it was allowed to remain for upwards of twenty years, till at length his sister was allowed to take it away and bury it with his remains at Shandraghan.

Beside the ruins of the old church of Shandraghan the grave of Father Sheehy is distinguished by the beaten path, which reminds us of the hold which his memory has to this day on the affections of the people. The inscriptions on the adjoining tombs are effaced by the footsteps of the pilgrims who stand over his grave, not rarely, or at stated festivals, but day after day, as I was informed on the spot, while the neglected tomb of the ancestors of the proud persecutor, Wm. Bagnell, lies at a little distance, unhonoured and unnoticed. The inscription on the tomb of Father Sheehy is in the following terms: "Here lieth the remains of the Rev. Nicholas Sheehy, parish priest of Shandraghan, Ballysheehan, and Templeheney. He died March 15th, 1766, aged thirty-eight years. Erected by his sister, Catherine Burke, alias Sheehy".

CHAPTER III.

Illegal Associations—Agrarian Disturbances in the North—"Oak Boys" and "Hearts of Steel".

From 1762 to 1770, the northern counties were the scenes of new risings of the peasantry, under the name of "Oak Boys" and "Hearts of Steel". The Oak Boys combination sprang up in opposition to the impositions that were practised on them by the gentry, under the sanction of an oppressive law, which had thrown on the unpaid labours of the poor, to a large extent, the charge of repairing the public roads, and not only those roads, but, according to Plowden, the law was perverted to the employment of their labour on private job roads.

From combining for the purpose of redressing those grievances, they eventually proceeded to the attempt of regulating tithes and prescribing terms to the proctors and their employers. A military force was sent to the disturbed districts, some lives were lost, the obnoxious Road Bill was repealed, and quiet partially restored.

The Hearts of Steel combination arose in the county Down about 1762, out of the proceedings of an absentee nobleman (Lord Downshire) possessing one of the largest estates in the kingdom, who had adopted a new mode of letting his land when out of lease, by requiring large fines, and reducing the rents in proportion to the latter. The poor occupiers of the land were unable to compete with the wealthy speculators, who had the means of making the required advance of rent in the way of fines, the lands were then taken by middlemen, and rack-rents, beggary, and wholesale eviction were the results. The causes of the northern disturbances at this period will be found clearly and succinctly detailed in the following statement, which will bring this introductory notice, already too far extended, to a close.*

* It would have been an easy matter to have referred to historians of literary eminence for an account of the northern disturbances, but it seemed to me desirable to learn the views and objects of the people engaged in those disturbances from a man of their own rank, and brought up amongst the actors in those combinations. The statement above referred to respecting the Hearts of Steel, etc., was communicated to me by James Hope, of Belfast, a man whose recollection carries him back to the events in question, and on whose vigorous mind their causes and results had left a deep impression. This extraordinary man, at the time the statement was made to me, I believe, was verging on his eightieth year, yet in the full possession of all his mental faculties, owing no advantage to birth, fortune, or education, and yet endowed with a more singular combination of excellent qualities and of natural endowments than is often to be met with in one similarly circumstanced. This self-educated man has lived for more than half a century by the labour of his own hands, and chiefly at the loom. R. R. M.

"My first recollection of public affairs commenced about 1770, when the country was agitated by the arrest of a farmer in Belfast, on the charge of being a captain of the Hearts of Steel, and, from the neighbours whom I heard in conversation with my father, I remember the following facts, which time and mature age have confirmed in my mind, especially from conversing with many who were then at age.

"The linen trade had flourished in Ulster, and enabled the families who worked at it to live comfortably by renting a house and garden, with grass for a cow, and sometimes for two, from the farmers; and may such families who were industrious became enabled to rent a small farm when a lease fell, or to purchase from others, who were emigrating to America, or who, owing to their indolence or profligacy, or both, had fallen into poverty.

"The high rents which the farmers charged to those weavers, and which they considered fair profits, taught the landlords the rising value of their land, and in some degree justified the Cottager in yielding to the tempation of offering a higher rent to the landlord than what a farmer could pay, but which he was enabled to do by the profits arising from his trade. He then divided his farm amongst his children as they grew up, and few men of that period seemed to consider any provision necessary for their descendents, except placing them on a level with, or, if practicable, above their neighbours, in point of property.

"Education was, of course, in a great measure, neglected, and the richer a man grew, the less he cared about any other knowledge than that which enabled him to extend his worldly possessions.

"Blindly pursuing gain, and overlooking the main point, social security, men bred in the country settled in Belfast, and became wealthy by means of commerce, chiefly in the provision and linen trades. Having intercourse with people from all parts of the country, and being ever on the look-out where a pound, or even a penny might be made by a bargain, they began to purchase whole townlands from the head landlords, and to turn large farms into stock-farms, to answer the export provision trade, while the people confined to the surface paid more attention to cultivation.

"The unthinking country squire, deceived by his sycophantic agent, who was paid by the pound for collecting his rents, imagined that high rents enhanced the intrinsic value of his land; and finding from the face of his books that his nominal rental was increased, and forgetting that the law of nature will be obeyed, and that the ocean itself has its bounds, yet, feeling that the entail of his estates gave them only to one heir, he lent to the crown his surplus income, and thus created, on usury, estates for the younger branches of his family.

"Things went on in this way; but some persons had different views from this, which were deeply impressed on their minds. Finding their necessities increase beyond the power of productive labour, they discussed in the field and at the loom questions respecting their social condition, the privileges of some, and the privations of others.

"A man will think what he will not always venture to express, and will say to some what he would not say to all; and thus an under-current of opinion began to run through society, which no act of parliament could reach.

"That class from whose ill-paid labour these means of enjoying the luxuries of life were drawn, brooding over their want and wretchedness, became reckless or vindictive; many, for the sake of better food and clothing, and comparative idleness, engaged in the trade of war. But the mass preferred a short life, as they expressed it, and a merry one at home, and thus originated the Hearts of Steel.

"In 1775 the linen trade had received its death-blow, by the consequences of the American war, and the introduction of the cotton manufacture.* The independent spirit of Ulster was now on the decline, and in the towns sordid, selfish speculators began to replace the respectable linen merchants. In the meantime, gaudy calicoes and paper money supplanted the precious metals and fine linen. Factories came into vogue. The people had to leave their own firesides; and the children of a tender age, girls in the bloom of youth and innocence, were transplanted from the cheerful spinning-wheel, under the roof of their parents, to loathsome workhouses or manufactories, in which they breathed an air that was mixed with the fumes of heated oil and cotton dust, and were consigned to the tuition of an overbearing, and often vicious manager. At that time a cotton weaver could earn from a pound to thirty shillings a week, working only four days, with less labour than a linen weaver could now earn five shllings, working six days, late and early. The various circumstances in operation produced a change of mind and manners before unknown in the country. But the variety of man's inventions produces effects in every age, which, being unforseen, leave the mass unprepared to accommodate itself to new circumstances, and turn them to advantage, which to some extent accounts for the slow progress of social improvement.

*Previous to 1775, "the exportation of Irish linen to America had been very considerable; but now this great source of national wealth was totally shut up by an extraordinary stretch of prerogative, under the pretext of preventing the Americans from being supplied with provisions from Ireland, which, in prejudicing that kingdom served only to favour the adventures of British contractors. This embargo, combined with other causes, produced the most melancholy effects. Wool and black cattle fell considerably in value, as did also land. The tenants in many places were unable to pay the rents, and public credit was almost extinct.—Plowden's "History of Ireland", vol. ii., p. 171.

HENRY GRATTAN. Born in Dublin, 1746. Educated at Trinity College; called to the Irish Bar, 1772; elected to the Irish Parliament, 1775. In 1782 moved address to the Crown demanding legislative independence, and a few months afterwards was successful in carrying it. In 1791 he attacked Parliamentary corruption and strongly advocated the claims of his Catholic fellow-countrymen. During the last Session of the Irish Parliament he represented Wicklow, and vehemently condemned the Union. He sat in the English Parliament from 1805 until his death, and frequently advocated Catholic Emancipation. He died in 1820, and was interred in Westminster Abbey.

"Observing these evils early in life, I set my mind to contemplate the causes of social derangement, and by thinking rather than reading, to get at some knowledge of the matter. I am still an imperfect reader, and have learned more by the ear than the eye, and by thinking than talking on any subject. That all human invention has bounds which it cannot pass, is as evident as that empires have limits to their duration. Their fate is inherent in the principles upon which they rise, and their durability depends on the energy or inactivity displayed in their operation, or the carrying of them into practical effect. I could never view a system admitting one class to political privileges, and excluding another from them on account of class or creed, in any other light than an organization at war with the community, and those exclusive privileges, but as so many alters on which human sacrifice was daily offered up, perhaps to a greater extent and variety than in any former age on record.

"To return to the Hearts of Steel. A farmer who resided near Belfast, and who was a ruling elder in the Presbyterian congregation of Carmmoney, persuaded the majority of his neighbours to allow him to take a lease of the townland in which he lived from the head landlord, with a promise that they should have every one his farm at the rate it should be obtained by wholesale. They all consented but two or three, who, nevertheless, shared the fate of the rest; for as soon as the elder got the lease, he raised all their rents, so as to have a considerable profit, besides requiring duty-work, a custom then claimed by the head landlords on their demesnes. One of those who had not consented, having refused duty-work, a custom then claimed by the head landlord, the elder's son set fire to a hedge of furze, on which some linen clothes of the non-conforming farmer had been put to dry, and this was the first incitement to retaliation. The elder's corn-kiln was set on fire by his own nephew, and a shot fired into his house (but not by the nephew), from which the aforesaid son narrowly escaped. This gave rise to the collection of bands in the districts where the raising of the rents had taken place, and each of these bands conferred the name of 'captain' on a resolute leader. If they went to burn a house, their captain's name was 'firebrand'; if to cut the corn on a farm that had been taken over another's head, as was their expression, before it was ripe, his name was 'long-scythe'. He also used to toss out hay to the rain, when the weather was likely to insure its destruction—his name was 'pitchfork': and this was the work of the brooding class mentioned above, few of whom were settled inhabitants, and none at all of either principle or character. This was manifest from their taxing the country by threatening letters for money to support their nightly revels. From their deliberate destruction of food, and their

cruelty to animals, they were evidently such a class as were afterwards collected into Orange lodges by the landlords, whom they will eventually undermine, as those landlords, in former parliaments, have undermined the true interests of the crown, by involving the country in a debt so overwhelming, that the productive industry of the country is overloaded, and the united interest of king and people sacrificed to sustain their own.

"About this period, several merchants of Belfast had purchased large farms, and turned them into pasture, and these were the men, chiefly, who lost cattle, although the rage ran against every man who held land which he did not labour.

"A Belfast merchant, named Gregg, having taken some townlands in the neighbourhood of Ballyclare, employed an old woollen weaver, called Gordon, from the county Down, as bailiff and caretaker, who laboured some farms which the occupiers or tenants had left on account of the high rents demanded by Mr. Gregg. When the crops were ripe, no person would help to reap them, and Mr. Gregg prevailed on the officers of a detachment of a Highland regiment, then quartered in Belfast, to send the soldiers out to reap the oats, and cut the hay, which they did; but the country people, during the night, scattered all to the weather. On a further application, the soldiers were sent to gather it again, but the populace appeared in such numbers that the officer did not think it prudent to commence the work; and one David Douglas being seen among them, was identified by Gordon and others of Gregg's people. David Douglas being a man respectable in his rank, was accused of being one of the captains of the Hearts of Steel. He then lived in the Templepatrick (Lord Templeton's) estate, and his lease having expired, and the Douglases being stout, active men, had made some spirited remonstrances with Mr. Hercules Hyland, his lordship's agent, with respect to the extremely heavy rents he was demanding for the land. His harshness was the more felt, when placed in contrast with the late agent, Mr. John Birnie, then lately deceased, and who had been a feeling, conscientious man between landlord and tenant. The Douglases were accordingly pointed out to Waddell Cunningham, William Wallace, the Greggs, and Stewart Banks, then sovereign of Belfast, as meriting punishment.

"These were some of the merchants before alluded to. David Douglas was arrested in Belfast on a Friday, and on the following Sunday the country people assembled and marched in a body into Belfast, where they attacked the military barracks where Douglas was confined. The attempt proving unavailing, with the loss of three men killed, viz., William Russell, Andrew Christy, and Robert Walker, and a number of others wounded, they set fire to Waddell Cunningham's house, and threatened the same fate to every

house in Belfast belonging to any of the merchant-middlemen. Doctor Haliday, an amiable man, who was respected by all classes of society, interposed, and Douglas was released. He gave bail to abide his trial at the assizes, and was acquitted; but others who were tried were not so fortunate, several having been convicted, and one man, named James M'Neill, whose innocence was afterwards fully established, was executed.*

"Men of loose, dissolute character were the chief perpetrators of the depredations of houghing, stabbing, and burning, and, as before mentioned, extorted money by threatening letters, and the people were obliged to submit, until military, both horse and foot, were stationed throughout the country. About this time Hyland was dismissed from the agency, and was succeeded by a Mr. Henry Langford Burleigh, who, by his prudence, firmness, and conciliating manner, joined with his equitable conduct, soon discontinued the dragooning system, and established confidence and good neighbourhood, and the country became perfectly quiet. When I say quiet, I do not mean contented, for the rise in the price of land, from the necessity of supporting immense armies, both by sea and land, for the aggrandizement of the few and the oppression of the many, has totally reversed the Christian rule on which all good government should be founded. Manners and customs underwent a revolution.

"People no longer thought of living by the proper exercise of their industry and the prudent direction of their means, and of labouring by their example and their efforts to enlighten and to better the condition of the mass of the people and enlarge the circle of social comfort. The evils, on the contrary, under which the people laboured were heightened by the rapacity of the landlords, the habits of settled opposition to improvements of all kinds on the part of the farmers, and the general dissipation of every class who could procure money by any means, stopping at none, however ruinous, or even criminal, to obtain it. The depredations of the Hearts of Oak, Hearts of Steel, and Whiteboys, and their punishment, and the provocation given them by the rapacity of landlords and tithe-mongers, formed the topics of conversation for winter nights, until the American troubles began to be noticed in the 'Belfast Newsletter'. That paper was not opposed to the ministry, yet it did not suppress the opinions delivered on that subject by the Earl of Chatham in Parliament. I did not comprehend the subjects then under discussion, but I saw there was a difference of opinion, and began to ponder on the arguments of the old men on the topics which have agitated Europe ever since

* Fact.

that period. I fell into the habit of observing the difference between what people said and what they did; for some of the greatest declaimers against the oppression of the landlords and the clergy, and who considered them as the advocates and abettors of the system which caused so much bloodshed in America, were the least willing themselves to abate one penny in the price of a stone of meal or a bushel of potatoes, or anything else, in a time of scarcity, that a poor man wanted to buy, at the same time the most careful to pay the least possible rate of wages to their servants. Yet these men would keep up the laudable practice of worship in their families, and read the very texts of Scripture condemning the acts which they would do as soon as they rose from their knees, scarcely allowing their servants any time for rest after their meals, and keeping them to work late and early. The religious and moral instruction to which I had recourse was so much at variance with what I saw in daily practice, that I began to doubt the sincerity of the religious professions in some cases, and at length to question it in very many. Finding my own thoughts vary often on those subjects, I had no human guide on whom I could depend; and my thoughts then, as now, surpassing my powers of expression, I kept them to myself, and I am only surprised how I have been directed through the labyrinth of a long life, like a weakling on a journey, who keeps his feet only by the staggering of his fellow-travellers.

"When peace was made with America, our intercourse with that country began to prepare the Irish mind for a struggle for its own independence, and in my thoughts the subject had its portion of attention. I observed the pride of property, which is inherent in the aristocratic spirit of our country, was pretty much the same, whether in the man of a million or in the forty shilling freeholder. Looking out for its origin, I found it in those arrangements into which men enter for procuring money which they do not earn, or did not inherit, by means of credit. Government set individuals the example of incurring expenses it could not meet without accommodation.

"Force, fraud, and stratagem are essential to the existence of a state of society which is founded on fictitious credit.

"We have seen that the disturbed state of the country gave the land-agents opportunities of widening the breach between landlords and tenantry, and at the same time put good bargains into the hands of the merchants, by the facility given to the landlords of drawing on them in foreign countries, where they might travel or reside. This increased the system of middlemen and rack-rents, and thus laid the foundation of future suffering for the people. To this system there appeared no bounds, and no prospects of sett-

ing limits to them, until the American revolution gave the public mind a fresh spring for exertion.

"The naval and military force of England being reduced by that unnatural war, and rendered unable to protect the trade or even the soil of Ireland, from the then powerful fleets and armies of France, the Irish people were under the necessity of arming for their own defence. They committed the direction of their force to such gentlemen as were resident in the country and considered men of public spirit. Many of these gentlemen went farther in professions than in subsequent times they would have wished, when political rights became more largely discussed and better defined.

"In other words, they overstepped the limited compass of their early prejudices and views of interest, as appeared afterwards in their conduct; for, although they attended public meetings where some of the soundest principles of political economy were developed and disseminated among the people, who heartily approved of the sentiments, yet those leaders secretly wished for an opportunity of abandoning the connexion, and this pretext they soon found in the crimes committed in the name of liberty, which succeeded the outburst of the revolution in France in 1789, which shook every throne in Europe. Such was the condition of the people, the nature of the disturbances in the north of Ireland, the origin of the Volunteers, the views of a large portion of its leaders, the seeds of disunion that were sown in its organization, and the results that were in embryo about the close of the year 1791.

"Thus far my notes were copied by Robert Montgomery, attorney-at-law, who founded the market that now bears his name.*

"Belfast, March 8th, 1843". "JAMES HOPE.

The preceding notices of the condition of the people, the cruelty of their oppressors, and the various agrarian disturbances resulting from them during a period of thirty years, from the beginning of the reign of George the Third to the origin of the Society of United Irishmen in 1791, though apparently unconnected with the particular epoch which this work is intended to illustrate, are by no means irrelevant to the subject of it.

* The vigour of a mind teeming with original thoughts (the matured production of strong sound sense), displayed in all the writings of this singular man, amply compensates for any defects of style or occasional abruptness in taking up or dismissing a subject. As to his orthography, nothing can be much worse; in fact, a richer mine of deep thought it would be difficult to find buried in such a mass of ill-spelled words. I claim some merit for the disinterment of the sense, but none beyond the discerning of it and the correction of the orthography.

Having frequently to recur to those writings of his which he has placed in my hands, the preceding observation will render any further reference to his peculiarity of style and diction unnecessary. R.R.M.

CHAPTER IV.

The Peep-of-Day Boys, Wreckers, Defenders, & Orangemen.

The Peep-of-day Boys sprung up in the year 1784, in the county Armagh. The members of this secret association were also known by the name of "Protestant Boys", and "Wreckers", and, finally, by that of "Orangemen". The character of their proceedings must have been particularly atrocious, when Sir Richard Musgrave felt the impossibility of palliating the exuberancy of their zeal in the cause of ascendency. He says: "They visited the houses of their antagonists (victims, he ought to have said) at a very early hour in the morning, to search for arms; and it is most certain that in doing so, they often committed the most wanton outrages—insulting their persons and breaking their furniture".*

The late Charles Teeling has given a graphic account of the proceedings of the Wreckers and Defenders†† in the county of Armagh,† and another remarkable writer, George Ensor, who had a personal knowledge of these factions, has treated of them.

The evils originating in Armagh had already extended to some of the adjacent counties, and conflicts had taken place between the Wreckers and large bodies of armed peasantry —the Defenders. In places where the contending parties were pretty nearly balanced, a salutary dread of each other, often produced a restraint on the movements of both; but where the Catholic population was thinly scattered, the latter were compelled for personal safety to establish nightly guards or patrols in the townlands or parishes, in proportion to the numbers of men, or extent of surface, furnishing its quota in arms. This served the double purpose, either of immediate defence or more distant alarm; similar posts being extended at times of increased apprehension for some miles over the face of the country. This system of nocturnal police—wearisome to the inhabitants and wasteful of their slender means—continued in some of the more exposed districts, with little or no intermission for whole seasons, and finally merged into the United Irish system.

Tone entertained opinions of an extravagant nature in regard to the political weight of the Defenders. He con-

* Vide Sir Richard Musgrave's History, p.54.

† "The History and Consequences of the Battle of the Diamond", by C. Teeling.

†† Proclamation dated February, 13, 1793. "For discovering and apprehending the rioters called 'Defenders', who have been guilty of violent and illegal outrages in the counties of Louth, Meath, Monaghan, Cavan, and Dublin, and in the town of Drogheda. Public Record Office, Dublin.

sidered their conspiracy a well-organized long-established confederation, which had been in secret communication with France for a great length of time. Teeling, however, positively asserts that Tone was mistaken, and that no such connection existed.

He says : "The Defenders looked to France in the earlier period of her republic with a twofold feeling of alarm, alike regarding the invasion of the altar and the throne: for they had not then imbibed those democratical sentiments which subsequently became almost universal throughout Ireland. Indeed they rather prided themselves as being the decendents of men, whose devotion to monarchy had long been proverbial, though their fidelity was badly requited. The proscription and persecution of the clergy in France, many of whom fled to this country for an asylum, confirmed the Defenders in the opinion that the rising republic was the declared enemy of their religion".

In and prior to the year 1795, a considerable portion of the population of the county of Armagh, we are told by Teeling, was divided into two hostile parties. The Peep-of-Day Boy party was composed of Protestants and Presbyterians; the Defender party originally consisted of Roman Catholics; the Peep-of-Day Boys were so-called on account of the nature of ther untimely visits—between dark and dawn—to the houses of their Roman Catholic neighbours for the purpose of despoiling them of their arms; the other, that of "Defenders", from their resistance to those aggressions.

From the spoliation of arms the "privileged" party proceeded to more general acts of plunder and outrage, which were perpetrated on most occasions with the most scandalous impunity.

The Catholic population of Ulster had acquired, in 1794 and 1795, a moral weight in the political scale of the province, which was rendered more manifest by the manly energy with which numbers of their Protestant and Presbyterian brethren came forward and protested against the longer continuance of those disabilities under which their great community had laboured throughout ages of injustice and unexampled oppression. Matters had thus far progressed, when the old policy of Irish rule was again had recourse to, efforts were made to infuse into the mind of the Protestant, feelings of distrust in his Catholic fellow-country men. "Popish plots and conspiracies" were fabricated with a practical facility, which some influential authorities conceived it no degradation to stoop to, and alarming reports of these dark confederations were circulated with a restless assiduity.

At this juncture Lord Carhampton was employed to tranquillize the west. The commander of his Majesty's forces in Ireland engaged with signal energy in the new campaign

against the peasantry. Hundreds of persons without form or trial were sent to serve on board the British fleet, or transported to the British colonies.

The subjoined "Declaration and Resolutions", from a wealthy and populous parish, bordering immediately on the district to which they advert, will serve, without the introduction of others, to inform the reader how far public opinion corresponded with Lord Gosford's representations of that persecution, which he so feelingly described and so forcibly denounced :—

"Declaration and Resolutions of the Inhabitants of the Parish of Tullylish (County of Down), George Law, Esq., in the Chair.

"RESOLVED—That we hold in just contempt and abhorrence the criminal advisers and wicked perpetrators of that inhuman, murderous, and savage persecution which has of late disgraced the county of Armagh.

"That if these barbarities are not immediately opposed, and some wise, firm and effectual steps taken by men in authority to arrest their progress, they will instantly involve this kingdom in all the horrors of a civil war, and deluge our land with blood.

"That, in our opinion, the present existing laws are fully adequate to the detection and punishment of every species of offence, in case the civil magistrate do his duty", etc.

The public journals of that period afford extensive information on the subject of those outrages. The following extract is taken from a provincial paper of the day :—

"Armagh, January 23, 1796.

"General Craddock arrived here to-day, in order to take upon him the command of the troops in this town and neighbourhood. We sincerely hope that he may be successful in rooting from amongst us that vile spirit of persecution and lawless depredation which has too long disgraced us".

It could not have been credited that those ruthless depopulators of Armagh would have carried their daring to the extent of marching on the town of Belfast, had not General Nugent, then district-commandant of his Majesty's forces in Ulster, conceived it his duty to make such arrangements for the protection of the town and the security of its inhabitants as his military foresight suggested. Extra guards were mounted. Lord Gosford observes, the "picture of those horrid scenes was sufficient to awaken sentiments of indignation and compassion in the coldest bosoms".

Denouncing the crimes of those oppressors, in his place in the Irish House of Commons, on the 20th of February, 1796, Mr. Grattan observed, "that of these outrages he had received the most dreadful accounts. Their object was, the extermination of all the Catholics of that county". He pronounces it "a persecution conceived in the bitter-

ness of bigotry—carried on with the most ferocious barbarity by a banditti, who, being of the religion of the state, had committed, with greater audacity and confidence, the most horrid murders, and had proceeded from robbery and massacre to extermination ! They had repealed by their own authority all the laws lately passed in favour of the Catholics—had established in the place of those laws the inquisition of a mob, resembling Lord George Gordon's fanatics—equalling them in outrage, and surpassing them far in perseverance and success. "These insurgents", continues Mr. Grattan, "call themselves Orange Boys, or Protestant Boys, that is, a banditti of murderers, committing massacre in the name of God, and exercising despotic power in the name of liberty".

I turn now to the battle of the Diamond, which was fought on the 21st of September, 1795. It is asserted by a writer on this subject, in the "Dublin University Magazine", that about the middle of the month (September) it was discovered, suddenly, that the Defenders were encamped—that they had congregated some thousands in number—and that, undiscovered until their work was complete, they had drawn a trench, constituting a species of rude fortification around them. In this writer's words : "The incorrect report of a spy, it is said, occasioned the first engagement at the Diamond". He qualifies his statement by, "it is said", and then proceeds as follows : "On a Saturday night in August, some young people acting as a watch having posted their sentinels, agreed to pass away the heavy hours in dancing or other amusements. In one of the games, a young man having appeared enveloped in a sheet, tidings of the circumstances were conveyed to a party of Defenders, accompanied by an explanation that it was designed to burlesque the Mass".

That a challenge was sent out by the Defenders, is asserted by Mr. Plowden, and admitted by the more modern historian. On that point both are agreed.

The ever memorable engagement, we are told by this writer, commenced with "a species of rifle warfare, followed up during two successive nights and days by an intermitting fire of musketry".

He states that "during a period of more than a week, within a range of six miles of the Diamond, every house had some of its inmates who kept a constant watch throughout the day as well as the night; and within that distance they could hear the report of musketry by night, in frequent, but not general discharges, as if the videttes of the opposite party fired to keep their enemies at a distance; but as soon as the morning light appeared it was

saluted by a loud volley, quickly returned and repeated from both armies, with little intermission, until the evening had faded away".

"Whenever", he continues, "after a short pause, or at the commencement or conclusion of the day's battle, the combat was renewed or concluded on each side by a general discharge, it was possible, at the distance of six miles, to distinguish the party who gave fire, and the hearts of the Protestants, according to their characters, died or burned within them, when they compared the faint report from their friends with the heavy and artillery-like thunders of the far outnumbering enemy". The historian, on this point, seems to be somewhat doubtful of the faith of his reader; and, in an explanatory note, thus accounts for the acute sense of hearing, which, at a distance of six Irish miles, could distinguish between Popish and Protestant fire: "The great superiority", he tells us, in "point of numbers, on the side of the Defenders, is universally admitted: Emmet, and even Plowden, confess it". This may be so, though one might be disposed to conclude, that "the heavy and artillery-like thunder" was more likely to proceed from the better armed and better disciplined body of the combatants. I shall give the reader, however, the advantage of Mr. Emmet's testimony touching "the great superiority in point of numbers", from "Pieces of Irish History", p. 137: "The Defenders were most numerous, but the Orangemen had an immense advantage in point of preparation and skill, many of them having been members of old Volunteer corps, whose arms and discipline they still retained, and perverted to very different purposes from those that have immortalized that body".

George Ensor, in a letter addressed to the editor of the "Evening Post", some years ago, gave an interesting account of the consequences of the wrecking system, and of the orgies of the descendents of the Wreckers, the Orangemen of Armagh, and the military exploits of one of their leaders in particular, "the renowned James Verner".

Mr. Ensor says: "At an election dinner in the county of Armagh, besides many toasts of cordial warmth, the festival was wound up by toasting the 'Battle of the Diamond'. This being reported to his Excellency, Lord Mulgrave, he directed Mr. Drummond to address each of the magistrates reported to have been present, requesting to know 'if he were a party to the commemoration of a lawless and disgraceful conflict, in which much blood had been spilled, and the immediate consequence of which was, as testified at the time by all the leading men and magistrates of their county, to place that part of the country at the mercy of an ungovernable mob'. That much blood was spilt in the commemorated battle, is certain. Colonel

Blacker, who was on the ground immediately after the fight, states that he saw about thirty Catholics carrying away dead on cars; but not one Protestant was killed that he could hear of. This, by-the-by, is rather an extraordinary issue of a fight which, it is said, was recommenced by the Catholics in treachery and by surprise. Yet, it was a day worthy of being toasted at an election dinner in 1837, and honoured with an appropriate song; for on the day of this fight originated the Orange Society, according to Colonel Verner's evidence before the Orange Committee.

"To Mr. Drummond's letter Mr. Synnot published a short answer, and Colonel Verner published a long one. Sir Thomas Molyneux has published two answers. Sir Thomas asserts, in the first, that he had entered the county from Blaris camp the day after the fight, 'and I can confidently assert', he says, 'that no manner of disturbance afterwards took place, at least for the eighteen months that my regiment remained in the district'. Not satisfied with this indirect denial of Lord Gosford's address, and the resolutions voted in December, 1795, by magistrates and other gentlemen to the contrary, he attempts to corroborate his assertion in a second letter. The following is the first resolution in the document he contravenes:—'That it appears to this meeting that the county of Armagh is at this time in a state of uncommon disorder: that the Roman Catholic inhabitants are grievously oppressed by lawless persons, who attack and plunder their houses by night, unless they immediately abandon their lands and habitations'. These resolutions were passed at the close of December, 1795, and subscribed by Lord Gosford, Capel Molyneux, William Richardson, Arthur Jacob M'Cann, Robert Bernard Sparrow, Alexander Thomas Stuart, Michael Obins, Hugh Hamilton, John Olge, William Clarke, Charles M. Warburton, William Lodge, William Bisset, Thomas Quinn, Owen O'Callaghan, John Maxwell, Joshua M'Geogh, James Verner, Richard Allott, Stewart Blacker, Robert Levingston, William Irwin, Joseph Harden, Joseph Lawson, William Blacker.

"The purport of the address by the late Lord Gosford, and the resolutions so subscribed, Sir Thomas Molyneux denies, saying, in his second letter, 'that the speech and the resolutions must be taken to refer to alarms which the Roman Catholic part of the population professed to feel, and to the threats in which the Protestant party (exasperated by the treachery which led to the Battle of the Diamond) may have indulged'. He adds, 'that the military in 1795 performed the duties that are now consigned to the constabulary, that he commanded the only infantry regiment in the country'. He then refers to his orderly-book, quotes an extract from it from the 9th of November,

1795, to the 28th of February, 1796; and as there are only five notices of military assistance inserted during this period, he concludes that the resolutions passed under Lord Gosford's auspices as Governor, and Mr. Drummond's letter, founded mainly on them, are not veracious, and that the alleged outrages at this period were merely alarms at one side, induced by threats from the other. This is rather preposterous logic; it runs thus—you, Lord Gosford, say, houses were attacked and plundered, etc.; and I, Sir Thomas Molyneux, say it is not so, for my orderly-book contains a very few notices of military assistance to repress such outrages. Yet the resolution I have quoted, is in itself a full answer to this objection; for it particularly states that the outrages were committed by persons unknown, who attack and plunder their houses by night. What could the military do on such occasions and supposing they could act to any purpose, who was to apply for assistance to the commanding officer? The person spoiled and plundered could not be attended to by him; he must be addressed through the magistracy; and were they likely to be on the alert in supporting the Catholics? Lord Gosford's address affords an answer. 'The spirit of impartial justice (without which law is no better than tyranny) has for a time disappeared in this county, and the supineness of the magistracy of this county is a topic of conversation in every corner of the kingdom'. Sir Thomas Molyneux not only denies that the address and resolutions, sanctioned by twenty-four magistrates and clergymen of the county (and one of the subscribers he, for every reason, honours and respects); but he asserts that from the day of the Diamond Fight, 'I can confidently assert that no manner of disturbance took place, at least for the eighteen months that my regiment remained in the district'. Eighteen months, from the 21st of September, 1795, brings the period to the 21st of March, 1797. Now for further proofs of disturbance in these eighteen months of halcyon tranquillity. At Lent assizes, in 1796, the sheriff, grand jury, and magistrates of Armagh addressed unanimously Earl Camden, stating—'We have seen, with the deepest regret, the outrages which, for some time past, have disturbed the peace, and interrupted the industry, of this prosperous county', etc. How far the following memorial will be construed as a proof of disturbance I cannot divine; but it appears in a Belfast journal of that time that the Orangemen marched, on the 12th of July, 1796,

through Lurgan, Warrenstown, Portadown, with colours, King William the Third on one side, and on the reverse George the Third. The account concludes:—'One of their captains, of the name of M'Murdie, was killed in the afternoon, in an affray with some of the Queen's County militia' ".

With respect to the consequences of these scandalous proceedings, the following observations are taken from Mr. Emmet's "Pieces of Irish History",

"The Defenders were speedily defeated, with the loss of some few killed, and left on the field of battle, besides the wounded, whom they carried away. After this, in consequence of the interference of a Catholic priest and a country gentleman, a truce between both parties was agreed upon, which was unfortunately violated in less than twenty-four hours. The two bodies that had consented to it for the most part dispersed; the district, however, in which the battle was fought, being entirely filled with Orangemen, some of them still remained embodied; but the Catholics returned home. In the course of the next day about seven hundred Defenders from Keady, in a remote part of the county, came to the succour of their friends, and, ignorant of the armistice, attacked the Orangemen, who were still assembled. The associates of the latter, being on the spot, quickly collected again, and the Defenders were once more routed".

But Mr. Emmet adds:—"Perhaps this mistake might have been cleared, and the treaty renewed, if the resentment of the Orangemen had not been fomented and cherished by persons to whom reconciliation of any kind was hateful. The Catholics, after this transaction, never attempted to make a stand, but the Orangemen commenced a persecution of the blackest dye. They would no longer permit a Catholic to exist in the country. They posted up on the cabins of these unfortunate victims this pithy notice: 'To Hell or Connaught'; and appointed a limited time in which the necessary removal of persons and property was to be made. If, after the expiration of that period, the notice had not been complied with, the Orangemen assembled, destroyed the furniture, burned the habitations, and forced the ruined families to fly elsewhere for shelter". Mr. Emmet also states:—"While these outrages were going on, the resident magistrates were not found to resist them, and, in some instances were even more than inactive spectators".

"The county of Armagh and its neighbourhood", he asserts, "were not destitute of military force, able and willing to repress these outrages. The Queen's County militia, consisting mostly of Catholics, was there, and exceedingly incensed at the unresisted, unrestrained, and

even unnoticed persecution against their religion which it was forced to witness". Mr. Emmet concludes his fearful, but too faithful description of this persecution, with these memorable words: "Neither the protecting hand of the government nor of the magistracy was held forth to the oppressed".

The Orange institution grew up and found favour in the sight of both, and in all human probability is destined one day to bring the British empire to the brink of ruin.

THE ORANGE INSTITUTION.

Orangeism, in its present phase of being, is not above sixty-five years of age. But this Buddha of bigotry and knavery combined began its incarnation in Ireland centuries ago.

The Lord Deputy Strafford, in a letter to the Lord Treasurer, dated 19th July, 1634, renders an account of the happy results of the policy of his Government in fomenting emulations, alias discords, between Catholics and Protestants:—

"This letter is only to give your lordship a short account of our proceedings in parliament. The parties are in a manner equal. Some few odds on the Protestant party; and one watching the other, lest their fellow should rob them, and apply the whole of his Majesty's thanks to themselves from the other. An emulation so well fomented underhand, that when the motion was made for the King's supply yesterday in the House of Commons (the fifth of their session), they did with one voice assent to the giving of six subsidies to be paid in four years".*

The great art politic in the government of Ireland of fomenting emulations, in another letter of the Lord Deputy, dated 18th August, in the same year (vol. i. p. 297), addressed to Mr. Secretary Cook, we find thus set forth, the parliament being now the object of the Lord Deputy's governmental care, and the strife not to be sown between sects, but between Lords and Commons.

"There fell a breach betwixt the two houses, which kept them asunder all this session; the Commons would not confer with the Lords, unless they might sit and be covered as well as their lordships, which the other would by no means admit. For my part I did not lay it very near my heart to agree them, as having heretofore seen the effects which follow when they are in strict understanding, or at difference amongst themselves; besides, I saw plainly that keeping them at distance, I did avoid their joining in a petition for the Graces, which infallibly they would have

* Letters of Thomas Earl of Strafford, vol. i. p. 274.

done, which now come only from the Commons. I conceive it would be very easy the next session either to agree or keep them still asunder. I desire there may be a thought bestowed upon it, and let me have my directions, to which I shall readily conform myself either way".

So the policy of governing a people by keeping alive discords among them was in being 223 years ago. A century nearer our own times, the demon policy, which it might be supposed none but a profligate courtier and statesman like Strafford could be found to practise, and to boast of, we find a Christian prelate, the Lord Primate Boulter, exercising high state authority in Ireland, proclaim the benefits of with a loud voice. The divine doctrine of the Sermon on the Mount, breathing peace and concord, contrasts strongly and strangely with that of the state policy of Primate Boulter. Lamenting the union of Catholic and Protestant subjects of the same state as likely to follow from certain circumstances, he writes to his good masters:

"The worst of this affair is, that it unites Protestants and Papists, and if that reconciliation takes place, farewell to English influence in Ireland".

The Orange system is perhaps the most unchristian institution that has sprung up in any European country in modern times. From its origin it was eminently hypocritical, its votaries professing a strong zeal for the interests of true religion, and burning with a fierce lust of lands and tenements in the possession of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects.

In the fervour of the assumed enthusiasm of Orangemen for the diffusion of pure religion, they posted the following pithy controversial notice on the door of the benighted Romanists—"To Hell or Connaught": now, as the Catholic people were held to be going to the former region their own way, in turning them out of their houses and homes, it would seem that it was their lands and tenements, and not the cause of true religion, about which these champions of the church were interested. Lord Chesterfield speaks of Lady Palmer, a young Irish lady of the old religion, who frequented the Castle in his time, as "a very dangerous Papist". The possession of beauty, like the occupation of land, on the part of the Romanists, was no doubt of a very dangerous tendency.

In the beginning of 1796, "it was generally believed (says Plowden) that 7,000 Catholics had been forced or burned out of the county of Armagh; and that the ferocious banditti who had expelled them had been encouraged, connived at, and protected by the government".* In the analysis of the report of the committee on Orange in-

* Plowden's "History", vol. ii. p. 377.

stitutions, in the "Edinburgh Review" of January, 1836, the following account is given of the proceedings of the Peep-of-Day Boys, and of their more systematic atrocities in 1795, under the newly-adopted name of Orangemen :—

"The first Orange lodge was formed on the 21st September, 1795, at the house of a man named Sloan, in the obscure village of Loughgall. The immediate cause of those disturbances in the north that gave birth to Orangeism, was an attempt to plant colonies of Protestants on the farms or tenements of Catholics who had been forcibly ejected. Numbers of them were seen wandering about the country, hungry, half-naked, and infuriated. Mr. Christie, a member of the Society of Friends, who appears to have passed sixty or seventy years on his property as quietly as a man may in the neighbourhood of such violent neighbours, gives a painful account of the outrages then committed. He says (5,573) 'he heard sometimes of twelve or fourteen Catholic houses wrecked in a night, and some destroyed' (5,570): 'that this commenced in the neighbourhood of Churchill, between Portadown and Dungannon, and then it extended over nearly all the northern counties. In the course of time, after the Catholics were many of them driven from the county, and had taken refuge in different parts of Ireland, I understood they went to Connaught. Some years after, when peace and quietness was in a measure restored, some returned again, probably five or six years afterwards. The property which they left was transferred in most instances to Protestants: where they had houses and gardens and small farms of land, it was generally handed over by the landlords to Protestant tenants. That occurred within my knowledge'. He further says: 'It continued for two or three years, but was not quite so bad in 1796 and 1797 as it was earlier. After this wrecking, and the Catholics were driven out, what was called "the Break-of-day" party merged into Orangeism; they passed from the one to the other, and the gentlemen in the county procured what they termed their Orange warrants, to enable them to assemble legally, as they termed it. The name dropped, and Orangeism succeeded to Break-of-Day Men' (5,575).

"At first the association was entirely confined to the lower orders; but it soon worked its way upwards, and, so early as November, 1798, there appears a corrected report of the rules and regulations officially drawn up, and submitted to the Grand Lodge of Ireland, under the presidency of Thomas Verner, Esq., Grand Master; J. C. Beresford, Esq., Grand Secretary, and others. The state of the country, soon after the formation of these societies, is faithfully described in an address which the late Lord Gosford, as governor of Armagh, submitted to all the lead-

ing magistrates of the county. His lordship stated that he had called them together to submit a plan to their consideration for checking the enormities which disgraced the county. He then proceeds: 'It is no secret that a persecution, accompanied with all the circumstances of ferocious cruelty which have in all ages distinguished that dreadful calamity, is now raging in this country. Neither age, nor even acknowledged innocence as to the late disturbances, is sufficient to excite mercy, much less afford protection. The only crime which the wretched objects of this merciless persecution are charged with, is a crime of easy proof—it is simply a profession of the Roman Catholic faith. A lawless banditti have constituted themselves judges of this species of delinquency, and the sentence they pronounce is equally concise and terrible: it is nothing less than a confiscation of all property and immediate banishment. It would be extremely painful, and surely unnecessary, to detail the horrors that attended the execution of so wide and tremendous a proscription, which certainly exceeds, in the comparative number of those it consigns to ruin and misery, every example that ancient and modern history can afford; for where have we heard, or in what history of human cruelties have we read, of more than half the inhabitants of a populous country deprived at one blow of the means as well as the fruits of their industry, and driven, in the midst of an inclement winter, to seek a shelter for themselves and their hapless families where chance may guide them ? This is no exaggerated picture of the horrid scenes now acting in this country; yet surely it is sufficient to awaken sentiments of indignation and compassion in the coldest heart. Those horrors are now acting, and acting with impunity. The spirit of impartial justice (without which law is nothing better than tyranny) has for a time disappeared in this country, and the supineness of the magistracy is a topic of conversation in every corner of this kingdom'.—Evidence, 3,251.

"The resolutions moved by Lord Gosford were adopted and signed by all the leading magistrates, who thus bore undeniable testimony to the persecution the Catholics were then suffering in that county, which was the cradle, and has ever been the hotbed, of Orangeism.

"We have carefully examined the documents submitted by the Orange society to the committee, respecting the objects of their institution, the motives of its members, and the qualifications necessary for candidates; and nothing apparently can be more humane, tolerant, and praiseworthy. Certain doubtful features occasionally, however, do peep through this coating of amiable professions. For instance, this society enforced on its members an oath of qualified allegiance:—'I, A.B., do solemnly swear'. etc.,

'that I will, to the utmost of my power, support and defend' the King and his heirs, 'so long as he or they support the Protestant ascendency'. Another suspicious article (No. 5) declares—'We are not to carry away money, goods, or anything, from any person whatever, except arms and ammunition, and those only from any enemy'—enemy no doubt meaning Catholic".

So much for the report, with regard to the objects of this society, and the obligations of its oaths, etc.

Now the oath above referred to is sufficiently objectionable on the score of the conditional allegiance it embodies; but the original oath or purple test of this society was not produced by the officers of this society on the inquiry entered into by the committee in 1835; but the existence of this diabolical test was given in evidence before the secret committee of 1798, by Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and the knowledge of it admitted by the committee on that occasion, when O'Connor's statement was answered by one of the members belonging to the administration, in these words: "Government had nothing to do with the Orange society, nor with their oath of extermination".

In the memoir of the examination of Messrs. O'Connor, Emmet, and M'Nevin, drawn up by themselves, O'Connor's answer is given to this observation:—"You, my Lord Castlereagh, from the station you fill, must be sensible that the executive of any country has in its power to collect a vast mass of information, and you must know, from the secret nature of the Union, that the executive must have the most minute information of every act of the Irish government. As one of the executive (of the United Irishmen), it came to my knowledge that considerable sums of money were expended throughout the country in endeavouring to extend the Orange system, and that the Orange oath of extermination was administered; when these facts are coupled, not only with the general impunity which has been uniformly extended to all the acts of this diabolical association, but the marked encouragement its members have received from government, I find it impossible to exculpate the government from being the parent and protector of these societies".*

The fact of the protection of the "Peep-of-Day Boys", or the Orangemen, on the part of the government of those times, admits of no doubt. When the Insurrection Act and the Convention Bill were introduced, the excesses of the peasantry, whom they had goaded into resistance, were denounced by the Viceroy and the legal officers of the government; but not the slightest allusion was made to

* Vide Memoir of the Examination of Messrs. O'Connor, Emmet, M'Nevin, etc.—(Published by the State Prisoners).

the outrages of the exterminators of Armagh; nay, bills of indemnity were passed to protect their leaders and magisterial accomplices from all legal proceedings on the part of their victims. As to the effect of these societies in promoting the views of the United Irishmen, it is clearly admitted by the members of the executive of the society of the United Irishmen, that the persecution of the people in Armagh, the protection of the exterminators, and the enactment of sanguinary laws, and especially the insurrection and indemnity acts, had not only filled the ranks of their society, but led the executive to the conclusion, that the government had forfeited all claims to obedience, and was to be resisted. "No alliance whatever was previously formed", says O'Connor, "between the Union and France" —namely, before the middle of 1796. The same answer is given by Emmet. So much for the power given to the United Irishmen, by the persecution of the people on the part of the Orangemen permitted by government; and as for the immediate causes of the outbreak of the subsequent and consequent rebellion, we can only refer to the question put by the Lord Chancellor, "Pray, Mr. Emmet, what caused the late rebellion ?" and the reply to it, of Emmet —" The free quarters, the house-burnings, the tortures, and the military executions, in the counties of Kildare, Carlow, and Wicklow".* In fact, persecution and disaffection followed in the order of cause and effect; the turbulence of the Defenders can only be looked on as the consequence of the Orange depredations, and the excesses of both parties the plea for the attempt of uniting the people of all religious denominations in one great national society.

Sir Jonah Barrington considers the idea of Orange Societies arose from the association of the Aldermen of Skinners' Alley. The latter owed its origin to the restoration of the old corporate body to their former power and privileges at the departure of James the Second. Their meetings were chiefly for the indulgence of that kind of Cherokee festivity which is indicative of sanguinary struggles or successful onslaughts, past or expected. Their grand festival was on the 1st of July, the anniversary of the Battle of the Boyne, on which occasion the charter-toast was drunk by every member on his bare knees. At the time of Sir Jonah's initiation, his friend Dr. Patrick Duigenan was the Grand Master. The standing dish, at the Skinners' Alley dinners, was sheep's trotters, in delicate allusion to King James's last use of his lower extremities in Ireland; and the cloth being removed, the charter-toast, the antiquity of which was of so ancient a date as the year 1689, was pronounced by the Grand Master on

* Vide "Memoir of Examination", etc.

his bare joints to the kneeling assemblage, in the following words:—"The glorious, pious, and immortal memory of the great and good King William, not forgetting Oliver Cromwell, who assisted in redeeming us from Popery, slavery, arbitrary power, brass money, and wooden shoes", etc., etc., etc. The concluding part of this loyal toast is a tissue of vulgar indecencies and impious imprecations on "priests, bishops, deacons", or any other of the fraternity of the clergy who refuse this toast, consigning their members to the operation of red-hot harrows, and their mangled carcasses to the lower regions. In detailing the particulars of these brutal and bacchanalian proceedings, Sir Jonah says, "It may be amusing to describe them"—and then he denominates the association as "a very curious, but most loyal society"; and that their favourite toast was afterwards adopted by the Orange societies, and was still considered the charter-toast of them all.* Sir Jonah's notions of mirth and loyalty were, no doubt, in accordance with those of the circle in which he moved. Indeed he prefaces this account of the exuberance of zeal of the Skinners' Alley aldermen, with a declaration of his own political sentiments, as being, though not an ultra, one in whom loyalty absorbed almost every other consideration.

Few of the Orangemen in the north were probably actuated by the motives to which their proceedings are commonly attributed. It is generally supposed that they were animated by a blind, indiscriminate fury against the people, solely on account of their religion. This is not a fair statement, and whoever inquires into the history of these times will find it is not true. These men were impelled, as their descendents are, by a simple desire to get possession of property or privileges belonging to people who had not the power to protect either, and to give their rapacity the colour of a zeal for the interests of their own religion.

It is doing the ascendancy party a great injustice to suppose that their animosity to their Roman Catholic countrymen arose from a mere spirit of fanaticism, or of mistaken enthusiasm in their religious sentiments. The plan of converting souls by converting the soil of the old inhabitants of a country to the use of the new settler, is of an ancient date. With this party the matter is one of money, and patronage, and preferment, and of property in land, which wears the outward garb of a religious question.

The Puritans who sought a refuge in America, when they found that most fertile portion of Massachusetts in the possession of the Indians, did not think of dispossessing the rightful owners of the broad lands they

* Vide "Barrington's Irish Sketches", vol. i. p. 152.

coveted, without giving the sanctimonious air of a religious proceeding to their contemplated spoliation.

They convened a meeting which was opened with all due solemnity and piety, and the following resolutions are said to have been passed unanimously :—

Resolved—That the Earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

Resolved—That the Lord hath given the Earth as an inheritance unto his saints.

Resolved—That we are the saints.

How far the ludicrous may be found herein to mingle with the historical data it is hard to say, but the spirit in which similar conclusions are arrived at in "the Island—proverbially—of Saints", it is impossible not to recognize, in the above-mentioned theological and political resolutions. The zeal of Orangeism in behalf of religion cannot impose on a close observer. The penal code was framed for the protection of confiscated property; and the assumed hostility to the religion of the people who were dispossessed, was only a practice in accordance with the purport and pretence of the iniquitous statutes, which had already legalized three general confiscations within a period of two hundred years. This legalized system of rapine and proscription has been productive of evils which still are felt; and those who, along with the lands of the proscribed people, obtained all the political privileges that were thought essential to the security of their new possessions, would have been more just than the generality of mankind, if, having power to protect the spoils they had obtained, or were encouraged to expect, they had not abused their privileges, and did not see in every extension of the people's liberties another encroachment on the limits, now daily narrowing, of their power, influence, and political pre-eminence.

The Defenders had their origin in the year 1785, but they were hardly known as a distinct and formidable body till the year 1792. Their first object, as their name imports, was self-protection, when the exterminating system was carried into effect by the Ascendency party in the north. But as their strength increased, their views became more political, and resistance to aggression led them to offensive measures against their enemies and the government which protected the latter.

After the battle of "the Diamond" had terminated in their defeat, the success of their conquerors was followed up by the rigorous measures of the military and magisterial authorities; the gaols were filled with these unfortunate people, and about thirteen hundred of them were

taken from the prisons by Lord Carhampton, without any legal process or form of trial, and sent on board the ships of war or transport vessels.

This was the first display of "the vigour beyond the law" which had been openly announced in parliament, and when carried into effect was protected there by an act of indemnity.

Analogous Bills to the "Treacherous Correspondence Bill" were passed in Ireland in 1793, but one was of a nature which would not have been tolerated in England, namely, to prevent persons meeting "under pretence" of preparing or presenting petitions, etc. This act was reprobated in England no less than in Ireland.

A system of agrarian outrage had been dragging on a protracted existence in Munster, from the period of the suppression of the "Whiteboy" disturbances, and had even spread into the northern counties, under the name of "Oak Boys", and "Hearts of Steel Boys", but they had been subdued by the military long before the exterminating proceedings of the "Peep-of-Day Boys" had come into operation. Their system, however, had been revived in Munster by a new set of disturbers called "Right Boys", after the supposed leader, Captain Right.

Mr. Fitzgibbon's bill for preventing these tumultuous assemblages, contained a clause directing the magistrates to demolish the Roman Catholic chapels in which any of these associations should have been formed or countenanced, which Mr. Grattan stigmatized as a legal sanction to sacrilege, and Mr. Secretary Orde declined to concur in such an enactment, and prevailed on his friend to withdraw it. Fitzgibbon was only desirous, whether in the extermination of the people or the demolition of their chapels, of carrying into effect the doctrine which had been laid down by the judicial authorities in 1759, on the trial of Mr. Saul, a Catholic merchant in Dublin, namely, "that the laws did not presume a Papist to exist in the kingdom, nor could they exist in it without the connivance of government".*

The Right Boys, however, had been likewise put down before the wrecking system began in Armagh. The former society was a feeble remnant of the Whiteboy Association, which had its origin in 1759 in the south of Ireland. The Whiteboys took their names from the frocks or shirts which they were in the habit of wearing when they assembled, and, armed with scythes, clubs and swords, they sallied forth at night, and committed many acts of agrarian outrage. The wrongs they professed to redress were those connected with the holding of lands on exorbitant

* See "Plowden's History", vol. ii. p. 270.

terms, the enclosing of waste lands, the extortion of tithe proctors, etc. Various laws were enacted to repress their excesses, all of which were of an agrarian character, wild, daring, ill-concerted, sometimes cruel, seldom premediated, and, eventually, were easily put down. The cause of these excesses is justly ascribed, by Plowden, to the agricultural distress which prevailed in the whole of the south of Ireland, consequent upon the practice generally adopted at that time, of converting the large farms into grazing lands, which were set to wealthy monopolists, who turned the wretched peasantry adrift. At the close of 1762, Lord Halifax congratulated parliament on the suppression of the insurrection of the Whiteboys.

In all these confederacies of the people, arising from agricultural distress, no matter how grinding the oppression of the authorities, how cruel the exactions of their landlords, how galling the exorbitant demands and proceedings of the tithe proctors, there was no availing sympathy for them either amongst the aristocracy or the squirearchy of the land.

The association of the Defenders, about 1792, had changed its character, from that of a society engaged in religious feuds, to one actuated by political motives, and the change was effected by the endeavours of the United Irishmen to reconcile the ultra Protestants and Catholics. Their views, however, continued so indistinct that Messrs. Emmet and M'Nevin could form no other opinion of their objects, except that a general notion prevailed amongst them, "that something ought to be done for Ireland". They had no persons in their body of the upper or even middling class in life. The only man known among them above the condition of a labourer, was a schoolmaster in Naas, of the name of Laurence O'Connor, who was executed in 1796. This man met his fate with a fortitude which has endeared his memory to the lower orders of his countrymen; his defence of the people, rather than his own, from the slanderous charges of his prosecutors, proves him to have been a person of no less intrepidity than superior talents.

In the same year it was discovered that an agent of the society of United Irishmen had interviews with the Defenders at Castlebellingham, in the county Louth, and had taken their oath of secrecy.

The object of Tandy's mission was to ascertain the real objects of the Defenders, with a view to the advantage of the Society of United Irishmen. The fact has not been avowed, but it cannot be denied. The aim of it was to turn the strength of that association of the peasantry into the channels of the United Irish system. One of the Defenders, who was present when Tandy was sworn, lodged informations against him, and he was fortunate enough to

effect his escape out of the kingdom. The Defenders gradually merged into the United Irishmen, and in a short time there was no distinction between them.

Orange Atrocities committed on the people previous to the Rebellion, during the years 1796-7.

The atrocities committed by the Orangemen on the people, not only in the north, but generally throughout the country, previously to the rebellion, especially during the latter part of 1796 and down to the autumn of 1797, when there was a temporary cessation of those enormities, have never been fully revealed. In fact little more is known of them than is to be gathered from general descriptions of house-wreckings and cabin-burnings—of wholesale extermination—of such events as six hundred families, at one fell swoop, having been swept off from a single county. But the particulars no historian of the time—no journalist—no writer living in the country dared to publish— and, accordingly, in Ireland we find no such record of them. Such a record, however, in the latter part of 1797, was published in London, by an Irish gentleman, a justice of the peace in one of the northern counties, under the signature of "An Observer". This pamphlet, now rarely to be met with, is called, "A View of the present State of Ireland, etc., addressed to the people of England". It is written with great ability, and bears throughout its pages the internal marks of authentic statements, wholly divested of exaggeration. The opinion entertained of its accuracy by James Hope, of Belfast, one well qualified to pronounce an opinion on that point, and whose opinion is entitled to respect, was conveyed to me in these words: "This pamphlet contains more truth than all the volumes I have seen written on the events of 1797 and 1798".

"Shortly after peace was concluded with America, ministers perceived they had been playing a losing game in Ireland; the Volunteer association had materially altered the face of the country: in many places the Catholics had embodied themselves into Volunteer corps: a friendly intercourse with their Protestant brethern naturally followed; they felt that as Irishmen their interests were co-equal, hatred on account of religion was banished, harmony prevailed, and, if not an union of affection, at least an union of political sentiment appeared to exist amongst the people: of this, administration was well informed, and ministers trembled for what might be the result. To avert "reformation" they felt it "their duty" to create "division". Various were the means employed to effect this immoral object

among others, they reverted to the old diabolical one of fomenting those religious feuds, which had so often consumed the vitals and palsied the native energy of the land.

"They taught the weak and credulous Protestant and Presbyterian to believe, that, if the Catholics who had obtained arms during the war, were suffered to retain them, they would seize on the first opportunity to overturn the government, and erect Popery on the ruins of the Protestant religion. This, and other acts equally insidious, had the desired effect on the minds of many persons, particularly in the county of Armagh, where the metropolitan resided.

"Here fanaticism reared her standard, and a number of deluded people entered into a combination for the purpose of depriving the Catholics of their arms by force.

"For some time the Catholics remained patient and tranquil under their sufferings; at length they declared that all their efforts to obtain legal redress had been unavailing, and that the necessity of the case would oblige them to enter into counter-combinations to defend their lives and properties against a banditti of plundering ruffians, who appeared to be countenanced by authority, inasmuch as they were not punished by the criminal law of the land. These two parties had several encounters, in which victory was various; but many of the Catholic party, wearied out by continual persecution, fled from Armagh to different parts of the kingdom, particularly to the counties of Louth and Meath.

"Led by passion and goaded by persecution, they proceeded (like the Peep-of-Day Boys, who first set the example, and who never were punished), to acts of felony, by taking arms by force; but they soon fell victims to their folly and imprudence. This, then, whatever interesting and designing men assert to the contrary, this was the true origin and progress of Defenderism in Ireland.

"The tumultuous spirit, which manifested itself in several counties, could have been crushed on its first appearance with much ease; but administration looked on with an apathy, which many enlightened men declared criminal.

"Had administration, then, proclaimed an amnesty to all who might be willing to take the oath of allegiance, many lives would have been preserved, and those shocking massacres which have outraged humanity and tarnished the character of the government, would not have taken place.

"In the county of Meath a number of Defenders had assembled, and a part of the army was sent in pursuit of them. On the first appearance of the soldiers they dispersed; but a few, who were closely pursued, took refuge

in a gentleman's house, where, after securing the doors, they defended themselves for some time; at length a capitulation was proposed; and it was agreed to by "all parties" that the Defenders should deliver themselves up, to be conveyed to the county gaol, for trial at the ensuing assizes.

"The doors were opened, the military entered; but, instead of observing the terms of agreement, they put every Defender to death. The body of each man, 'killed off', was cast from a window into the street, and for this brutal ferocity the soldiers were not even reprimanded. In the county of Louth, there was a party of unhappy men attacked by a squadron of dragoons, who could have easily made the whole of them prisoners, but no mercy whatever was extended to them: those who escaped the sword were driven into a river and drowned.

"And at the head of this military corps was a magistrate of the county, a gentleman who afterwards held an eminent seat in the Irish parliament.

"A party of the army was ordered out to attack a body of Defenders, assembled near the village of Ballanaugh, in the county of Cavan. On the approach of the military they dispersed; many of them sought shelter in the village, hiding themselves under beds, etc., which evinces that their resistance (if they made any) must have been feeble, and that it would be an easy matter to make them prisoners; but that would not satiate the vengeance of those monsters, who are stained with the blood of the Irish peasantry. The magistrates and officers commanding the party ordered the soldiers to surround the village and set it on fire, which order was readily obeyed. Every house, with the exception of one, was burned, and many innocent people perished in the flames with the guilty. No investigation, no legal process, took place; nor was the gentleman indemnified, to whom the village belonged, for the loss of his property. In the counties of Westmeath, Longford, and Monaghan, similar excesses were committed. To mention the barbarities and scenes of horror which took place in the province of Connaught is unnecessary. The last parliament, by an act which disgraced it and betrayed the rights of its constituents, gave them more strongly to the world than any detailed account can possibly do. So flagitious, illegal, and unconstitutional was the conduct of the magistracy, that the administration (yes, even the administration of Ireland !) was afraid to let the atrocities which had been committed meet the public eye; and ministers procured a bill of indemnity to be passed in parliament, to screen from punishment those officers of the "peace" who, at the hour of midnight, tore men from the arms of their families, merely on the suspicion of their being

"seditious," and dragged them on board loathsome prison-ships, transporting them to destructive climates, without "examination," without trial, "unheard," "unpleaded"! And for these "services" and "gallant exploits," the man who figured foremost in the scene had been promoted to situations of the first importance in the nation.*

"In January, 1796, a party of Orangemen, the Peep-of-Day Boys having adopted this new designation, headed by William Trimble, came to the house of Mr. Daniel Corrigan, a very reputable citizen, in the county of Armagh, parish of Kilmore, and, having before robbed him of his arms, which, being registered, he was by law entitled to retain, they demanded a pistol he had "subsequently" purchased to protect him as he travelled round the country (he being a dealer in cattle), which having obtained, they retired, promising his family protection; but returned in about twenty minutes, and, forcing the door, Trimble murdered Mr. Corrigan, by lodging seven balls in his body from a blunderbuss, and then destroyed the house and furniture. Trimble was afterwards apprehended, tried, found guilty, and ordered by the judge for execution in forty-eight hours; but through a "certain" interference he was respited. He continued in gaol till the ensuing assizes, when he was again arraigned for having murdered Mr. Arthur M'Cann, as also for several robberies; but his trial was put off, and in a few days he was ordered for "transportation", when he was only sent to Cork, from whence he was "suffered" to go on board the fleet, like "a good and loyal subject".

"The house of Mr. Bernard Crosson, of the parish of Mullanabrack, was attacked by Orangemen, in consequence of being a "reputed" Catholic. His son prevented them from entering by the front door, upon which they broke in at the back part of the house, and, firing on the inhabitants, killed Mr. Crosson, his son, and daughter. Mr. Hugh M'Fay, of the parish of Seagoe, had his house likewise attacked on the same pretence, himself wounded, his furniture destroyed, and his wife barbarously used.

"Information having been lodged against a few individuals living in the village of Kilrea, in the county of Derry, for being United Irishmen, a party of the military were ordered to apprehend them; the men avoided the caption, and about three o'clock in the morning, a "reverend" magistrate, accompanied by a clergyman of the same discription, and the commanding officer of the party, ordered the soldiers to set fire to the houses of the accused: the men obeyed, and all was consumed. There were four

* Lord Carhampton.

houses which could not be burned without endangering the whole village; they therefore gutted them, and, having carried out the moveables, burned them in the street.

"One circumstance peculiarly savage took place on this occasion:—The wife of one of the accused had been delivered of a child only the day preceding; she was carried out of her house, and, with the infant, thrown into the snow, while her blankets and wearing apparel were consigned to the flames. None of these savage violators of law and humanity were brought to justice; on the contrary, the reverend magistrate has since been promoted to a more enlarged benefice. It is a well known fact that, in the county of Armagh alone, "seven hundred Catholic families" were driven to poverty and desolation, their houses burned, and property destroyed by Orangemen. It may be said that administration was not the secret mover in these horrid scenes; but the following facts will, I think, enable the reader to form a tolerable opinion on the subject:—Three Orangemen voluntarily made oath before a magistrate of the county of Down and Armagh, that they met in committees; amongst whom were some "members of parliament", known to be the tools of state, who gave these people money, and promised "they should not suffer" for any act they might commit, and pleged themselves that they should hereafter be provided for under the auspices of government. Furthermore, the said magistrate addressed a letter to the Secretary of State, inquiring of him how he should act in these critical times; that hitherto he had preserved peace on his large estate, but wished to know how he should act in future; and that if it was necessary for the preservation of the "present system" for him to connive at or encourage the Orangemen in their depredations, he said, as "a man," he knew "his duty"; if it was "not" necessary, he hoped the magistrates of the county at large would be made responsible, and be compelled to act against these "depredators". This letter was written in consequence of a large meeting which was advertised to be held by the Orangemen in about ten days after. Though he could have had an answer in four days, he did not receive one for two months; and when it did make its appearance, it was couched in such evasive and equivocal language, that it was impossible to comprehend its meaning. It is also worthy of remark that these unprincipled hirelings were never once mentioned in the answer.

"In the month of May last, a party of the Essex Fencibles, accompanied by the Enniskillen Yeomen Infantry, commanded by their first lieutenant, marched to the house of a Mr. Potter, a very respectable farmer, who lived within five miles of Enniskillen, in the county of Fermanagh. On their arrival they demanded Mr. Potter, saying they

were ordered to arrest him, as he was charged with being an United Irishman. His wife, with much firmness, replied, 'that to be an United Irishman was an honour, not a disgrace; that her husband had gone from home the preceding day on business, and had not yet returned'. They assured her that if he did not surrender himself in "three hours" they would burn his house. Mrs. Potter answered, 'that she did not know exactly where he then was, but, if she did know, she believed it would be impossible to have him home in so 'short a time'. In less than three hours they set fire to the house, which was a very neat one, only about five years built; the servants brought out some beds and other valuable articles, in the hope of preserving them, but the military dashed all back into the flames. The house and property, to the amount of six or seven hundred pounds, were consumed, and Mrs. Potter, with seven children, one of them not a month old, were turned out, at the hour of midnight, into the fields.

"In June, 1797, a party of the Ancient Britons (a fencible regiment, commanded by Sir Watkins William Wynne) were ordered to examine the house of Mr. Rice, an inn-keeper in the town of Coolavil, county of Armagh, for arms; but on making very diligent search, none could be found. There were some country people drinking in the house, and discoursing in their 'native language'; the soldiers damned their 'eternal Irish souls', said they were speaking 'treason', and instantly fell on them with their swords and maimed several desperately. Miss Rice was so badly wounded that her life was despaired of, and her father escaped with much difficulty, after having received many cuts from the sabres of these assassins.

"In June, some persons had been refreshing themselves at an inn in Newtownards, county of Down, kept by a Mr. M'Cormick, and it was alleged that they were overheard uttering words termed seditious. M'Cormick was afterwards called on to give information who they were; he denied having any knowledge of them, observing that many people might come into his house whom he did not know, and for whom he could not be accountable. He was taken into custody, and next day his house and extensive property were reduced to ashes. The house of Dr. Jackson was torn down on 'suspicion' of his being 'an United Irishman'; and many other houses in that town and barony were destroyed, or otherwise demolished, by English Fencibles, on similar pretexts.

"On the 22nd of June, Mr. Joseph Clotney, of Ballinahinch, was committed to the Military Barracks, Belfast, and his house, furniture, and books, worth three thousand pounds, destroyed; also the valuable house of Mr. Armstrong, of that place, was totally demolished.

"In the month of April last, a detachment of the Essex Fencibles, then quartered in Enniskillen, were ordered, under the command of a captain and adjutant, accompanied by the First Fermanagh Yeomanry, into an adjoining county to search for arms. About two o'clock in the morning they arrived at the house of one Durnian, a farmer, which, without any previous intimation whatever, they broke open, and on entering it, one of the fencibles fired his musket through the roof of the house: an officer instantly discharged his pistol into a bed where two young men were lying, and wounded them both. One of them, the only child of Durnian, rose with great difficulty, and on making this effort, faint with the loss of blood, a fencible stabbed him through the bowels. His distracted mother ran to support him, but in a few moments she sank upon the floor, covered with the blood, which issued from the side of her unfortunate son; by this time the other young man had got on his knees to implore mercy, declaring most solemnly that they had not been guilty of any crime, when another fencible deliberately knelt down, levelled his musket at him, and was just going to fire, when a sergeant of yeomanry rushed in, seized, and prevented his committing the horrid deed. There were persons present who smiled at the humanity of the sergeant.

"Information had been lodged that a house near Newry contained concealed arms. A party of the Ancient Britons repaired to the house, but not finding the object of their search, they set it on fire. The peasantry of the neighbourhood came running from all sides to extinguish the flames, believing the fire to have been accidental—it was the first military one in that part of the country. As they came up they were attacked in all directions, and cut down by the fencibles; thirty were killed, among whom were a woman and two children. An old man (above seventy years), seeing the dreadful slaughter of his neighbours and friends, fled for safety to some adjacent rocks; he was pursued, and, though on his knees imploring mercy, a brutal Welshman cut off his head at a blow.

"I have stated incontrovertible truths. Months would be insufficient to enumerate all the acts of wanton cruelty which were inflicted on the inhabitants of Ireland from the 1st of April to the 24th of July, 1797".—A view of the present state of Ireland, etc. By an Observer. London, 1797.

Specimens of the Summary Notices of the Wreckers of Armagh and Down, addressed by the Catholic inhabitants of those counties, extracted from a tract called "Lysimachia", published in Belfast in 1797, and ascribed to a Scotch Clergyman, Dr. Glass, who held the Church of Connor.

"To JOHN HOLLAN, COOPERNACK, GILFORD.

"John Hollan, you are desirred to abandon you house agen the 21st of March; and if you don't, we will reck you worse than never we did Devlin, and the resen is this—that you preten to be a Protestant, and is not; moreover, you have a Papish wife. You also harbour at you house one Lenny Lennon, one of the Lisnagade Defenders, who fired a pistol at an Orangeman. We pipered him, and gave him a fortnight's warning, and sin he is not gone yet, but if he waits our coming he shall pay double for all his iniquities. Given under our hand this —— day of March, being the second year of the distruction of the Pope, the great scarlet wh—re of Babylon, and his infernal imps, the priests".

"TO THE INHABITANTS OF ————.

"Take Notice.—If any person will buy any turf from any Papis in the Glass Moss, that we will sow no feaver to any person, friend or stronger, by any means; for, by the living G—d, if you will go against my word, that Captin Racker will vizet you when you not thinking of him. Bold Anty. M'Cusker, Dannal Hogen".

"Morthugh M'Linden, we have speared you as long as possible, but we will see you shortly; we come unexpected. Now more at present, but romains your humble servant, Captin Racker: and brave old Humpy will be there also".

"Farrell, we desire you to clear aff, and if you do not, we will fetch Captin Slasher Raker, G—d's cratur, and Humpy to you, and Captin Slasher wh—re. Go to H—ll, Connat, or Butney Bay. And if ony one harbours you or your goods, by Hevens we will pitch the Thatcher and Glasser to them".

—:—

Emmet, M'Nevin, and O'Connor, give the following account of the influence of the Armagh persecution in driving the people to desperation.

"The provocations of the year 1794, the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, and the reassumption of coercive measures that followed it, were strongly dwelt on. The county of Armagh had been long desolated by two contending factions, agreeing only in one thing, an opinion that most of the active magistrates in that county treated one party with the most fostering kindness, and the other with the most rigorous persecution. It was stated, that so marked a partiality exasperated the sufferers and those who sympathized in their

misfortunes. It was urged with indignation, that notwithstanding the greatness of the military establisment of Ireland, and its having been able to suppress the Defenders in various counties, it was never able, or was not employed to suppress these outrages in that county, which drove 7,000 persons from their native dwellings. The magistrates, who took no steps against the Orangemen, were said to have overleaped the boundaries of law to pursue and punish the Defenders. The government seemed to take upon themselves those injuries by the Indemnity Act, and even honoured the violators, and by the Insurrection Act, which enabled the same magistrates, if they chose, under colour of law, to act anew the same abominations. Nothing, it was contended, could more justly excite the spirit of resistance, and determine men to appeal to arms, than the Insurrection Act; it punished with death the administering of oaths. The power of proclaiming counties, and quieting them, by breaking open the cabins of the peasants between sunset and sunrise, by seizing the inmates, and sending them on board tenders, without the ordinary interposition of a trial by jury, had, it was alleged, irritated beyond endurance the minds of the reflecting and the feelings of the unthinking inhabitants of that province".—"Memoir of the Irish Union", p. 14.

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CHAPTER V.

The Volunteers—Their efforts for Reform—Origin and Dissolution.

The period between the successful issue of the struggle for the independence of the Irish parliament, and the outbreak of the rebellion in 1798, was one of the most stirring and memorable epochs in the history of Ireland. The momentous events which were then taking place in other countries exerted a powerful influence on the political sentiments of the upper and middle classes of our people.

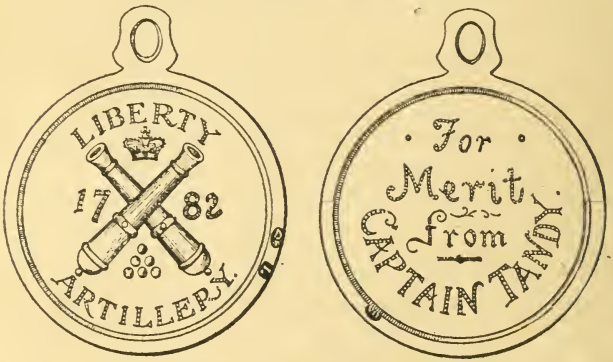
This period abounded with events of greater importance than any that preceded it for many centuries. The evil genius of George the Third, which strongly disposed him to take the side most adverse to the people on any popular question, and invariably opposed his inclinations to the extension of freedom, civil or religious, succumbed eventually to the spirit of liberty in another hemisphere, and the independence of a New World was the consequence.

In France, the royal adherence to despotic principles, rather than the King's abuse of despotic power, prepared the way for the accomplishment of the ends of those political philosophers who, in the words of Condorcet, "without forseeing all that they have done, have yet done all that we have lived to see accomplished". The arrogance of a nobility enervated by luxury, and emboldened in its vices by the servility which had been long regarded as the allegiance of the vulgar to its pomp, had brought the court into contempt, and militated at last against the monarchy itself. In Ireland, the two great examples I have quoted, of the power of the people, and the success of its united efforts for the attainment of objects nationally desired, were not overlooked; on the contrary, they were regarded with feelings of wonder and admiration. No country in the world at that period stood in a position more likely to be affected by such examples: everything was anomalous in her condition. She belonged to England, and was said to be an independent nation; she had a parliament, and, it might be presumed, therefore, legislative power, she owned allegiance to a king who owed his crown to a revolution which was risked in defence of civil and religious liberty. It might, therefore, be expected that the creed of his Irish subjects could not prejudice their civil rights; nevertheless, Ireland at this period was regarded by England, not as a sister, but as a rival whose clashing interests were constantly to be repressed. Her parliament was a theatre of automaton performers, with an English minister behind the scenes: he pulled the wires, and as he willed, the puppets moved; and while the spectators wondered at the nimble members that were set in motion, and listened to the words that seemed to issue from their mouths, they almost forgot the British mechanist who stirred or stayed the "fantoccini" of the Irish parliament. Her judges were dependent on the crown. Her military establishment was independent of her parliament. Her trade was impeded by prohibitory statutes which utterly sacrificed her interests to the aggrandisement of England. The result of three general confiscations of the property of the natives of the country in the course of two hundred years, had left five-sixths of the landed property of the nation in the hands of the Protestant inhabitants, who hardly amounted to one-tenth of the whole population. It unfortunately was considered, at the time of King William's settlement, that the Reformation was not sufficiently cemented to bear the weight of toleration on the same pedestal on which religion was placed by Henry the Eighth. The old plea for spoliation—the civilization of the subdued by means of compulsory conversion—had never been abandoned; but the effort was not successful, and the church gained only a few indifferent members, whilst the sovereign

lost the affections of some millions of subjects by the attempt.

Irish Volunteer Medals.

Dublin Volunteers Medal, 1780.



Dublin (Liberty) Artillery Medal, 1782.

In the early part of the reign of George the Third, Roman Catholics were debarred from holding any office in the state, civil or military, above that of constable, parish overseer, or any like inferior appointment. They could not endow any school or college; they could not contract marriage with Protestants, without subjecting the priest who solemnized such marriage to the penalty of death, if unfortunately discovered; any justice of the peace, even without information, might enter their houses by day or night to search for arms; they could obtain no degrees in the University of Dublin; they, with all the inhabitants of this realm, were charged to attend divine service, according to the established religion, upon Sundays and holidays, on pain of ecclesiastical censure, and forfeiture of twelve pence for every time of absence; their clergy dared not officiate at any funeral, or

any other public ceremony, outside their own place of worship. A child of a Catholic (by the 8th of Queen Anne), at any age, on conforming to the Protestant faith, might file a bill against his father, and compel him on oath to give an account of his property: whereupon the Chancellor was empowered to allot, for the child's immediate maintenance, one-third of the father's goods and personal chattels, and, on the death of the father, the statute assigned no limits to the power of the Chancellor over the property in favour of the Protestant child. Neither the concessions of 1778, nor those of 1782, secured the Catholics in property acquired in that interval against the provisions of the 8th of Anne. Every Catholic (male or female), of every grade, was compellable, on pain, not only of fine and imprisonment, but of the pillory and whipping, to appear, when summoned before any justice of the peace, to give information against any Papist he or she might know to keep arms in his house; and not the least offensive of these disabilities was, their exclusion from the exercise of the elective franchise, a right enjoyed by the Catholics from the first adoption of the English constitution, secured to them by the treaty of Limerick in 1691, guaranteed by King William and Queen Mary, and even ratified by Parliament, and which was taken from them in the first year of the reign of George the Second. Even by the Act of Concession of 1778, "no Popish university or college" could "be erected or endowed". The chief concessions of the act of 1778 were the following:—Papists were empowered to take leases for any term, not exceeding nine hundred and ninety-nine years, or any number of lives, not exceeding five; to purchase or take by grant, descent, or devise, any species of property; to educate youths of their own persuasion; to be guardians of their own children; to intermarry with Protestants, provided the marriage was solemnized by a Protestant clergyman; and a Popish clergyman duly licensed to officiate in any church or chapel, without a bell, or any symbol of ecclesiastical dignity or authority; and, by subscribing the oaths of allegiance, Papists might qualify to be called to the bar and to become attorneys. Such was the state of Ireland, when "a voice from the New World shouted to liberty", in the words of Flood, and the example of America found a plea, in the apprehension of invasion, for calling forth the Volunteers of Ireland. Their first demands were made somewhat in the spirit of the Spanish beggar's supplication. Their artillery corps appeared on parade in Dublin, with labels on the mouths of their cannon, bearing the words: "Free trade or speedy revolution". Their importunity increased with their strength, and at length they demanded from England the independence of their country, and England was not then in a condition to refuse it.

This extraordinary association of armed citizens owed its origin to a letter of Sir Richard Heron, in reply to an application from the inhabitants of the town of Belfast to Government, for the protection of a military force, on the alleged ground of the danger of invasion, the apprehension of which was then loudly talked of over the country. To this demand, the answer of the secretary, Sir Richard Heron, was, that Government could afford none.

In fact, in 1777 the Government had no means of national defence, and "the people", says Hardy, "were left to take care of themselves". An English army at that time was captive in America—the war had drained both countries of their forces. Previously to the secretary's admission of the weakness of the Government, or the negligence that had left the country without defence, a few straggling corps of armed citizens were formed for the protection of the coasts; but the Volunteer institution soon spread over the country, and in one year its members amounted, we are told by Hardy, to 42,000 men. The number in a short time had nearly doubled.

The people literally flew to arms. A great enthusiasm, such as occurs only at rare intervals in the life of a country, passed over the land. They elected their own officers, purchased arms and equipment, assembled regularly and orderly under the direction of ex-soldiers to acquire a knowledge of military matters, and completely submitted themselves to discipline. The highest personages placed themselves at the head of the organisation. The Duke of Leinster commanded the Dublin Regiment, Lord Charlemont, the Armagh corps, and Lord Altamont that of Co. Mayo. The Catholics, at first, were not enrolled, but they subscribed very generously to the funds.

An army of volunteers of 80,000 men, self-raised, self-supported, self-commissioned, in a country hitherto treated as a conquered one, which was only to be governed by the weakness of a divided people, was a strange phenomenon. Grattan and other enlightened chiefs of the new army declared the essential strength of the volunteer association was the union of Catholic, Protestant, and Presbyterian—"of Irishmen", in short, "of every denomination". The reader need not look further for the origin of the "United Irishmen": the latter association naturally sprung out of the former institution, when it departed from its original principles and dwindled away and died rather ingloriously.

The following document is a copy of the original compact, entered into for the formation of the first volunteer corps, with the signatures of the members of the association, bearing date, the 26th of March, 1778, and styled the "Belfast First Volunteer Company". This curious document, which may be regarded as the Magna Charta of the Irish Volun-

teers, was in the possession of Mr. Francis M'Cracken, of Belfast, one of the original members, and, as he informed Dr. Madden, then the only surviving one of them. This gentleman, then in extreme old age, spoke of the establishment of the association—of its noble appearance and its admirable discipline, with all the enthusiasm of his early days in its service. The uniform he wore on the first parade-day of his company, was produced on the occasion of Dr. Madden's seeking a copy of the document, and, at the expiration of sixty-four years, was once more put on by the old gentleman, to show how it looked; and the spirit of the old volunteering times seemed, for a moment, to animate the features and to set up the stooping form of the old soldier of his country, as he paraded his drawing-room, recalling the stirring times of his volunteering days, and the glorious scenes he had witnessed when that old uniform was first in requisition.

This sort of practical connection of two links of time, many years apart, and replete with so many striking reminiscences, was not without a touching interest.

The immediate cause of the formation of the Belfast Volunteer Association, is said to have been, the receipt of the letter that has been referred to from the chief secretary of state, Sir Richard Heron, in reply to a communication from the principal inhabitants of Belfast, through the sovereign of that town, Mr. Stewart Banks. The reply was to the following effect:—

Dublin Castle, August 14, 1778.

SIR—My Lord Lieutenant having received information that there is reason to apprehend three or four privateers, in company,* may in a few days make attempts on the northern coasts of this kingdom; by his Excellency's command, I give you the earliest account thereof, in order that there may be a careful watch, and immediate intelligence given to the inhabitants of Belfast, in case any party from such ships should attempt to land.

The greatest part of the troops being encamped near Clonmel and Kinsale, his Excellency cannot, at present, send no further military force to Belfast than a troop or two of horse, or part of a company of invalids; and his Excellency desires you will acquaint me, by express, whether a troop or two of horse may be properly accommodated in Belfast, so long as it may be proper to continue them in that town, in addition to the other two troops now there.

I have the honour to be, etc., etc., etc.,

RICHARD HERON.

* In the month of April, 1778, the "Ranger" privateer, Captain Paul Jones, mounting eighteen guns, had sailed round H.M.'s sloop of war "Drake", lying in the harbour of Belfast.

The Volunteers appear to have first determined on uniting, and then asking, in a dutiful manner, for the consent of the guardians of the public peace. The above letter is dated the 14th August, 1778, when the first Volunteer Association had been already nearly five months in existence in Belfast, having been formed the 26th of March. Paul Jones's appearance off the harbour, and sailing round the "Drake", did not take place till the 13th of April; so that the sound of the loud voice that was shouting across the Atlantic appears to have reached the shores of our modern Athens before the fear of foreign invasion or piratical attempts had inspired much alarm, or stimulated the military ardour of the sturdy spirit of the northern presbyterians :—

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed, inhabitants of the town of Belfast, in consideration of the impending war with France, and the apprehension of a hostile invasion of the country, and of the consequent intestine commotions that may arise therefrom, do hereby associate ourselves together to learn the military discipline, for defence of ourselves and this town and county, under the name of the Belfast First Volunteer Company; and we plight our faith, each to all, to be governed in this our design, in every case that may arise, by the voice of the majority; and that we will not withdraw from the Company from any other cause than removal or bodily indisposition; and that we will each bear a proportional share of the expenses that may arise to the Company, and that we will never accept of any wages or reward from government as a Volunteer Company, or submit to take any military oath or obligation therefrom.

Given under our hand this 26th March, 1778.*

Thomas Brown,	Robert Hyndman,
Stewart Banks,	Robert Linn,
Joseph Murray,	Samuel M'Cadam,
James Joy,	William Duxen,
William Caldbeck,	Henry Joy, jun.
Jones Park, Jun.,	Robert Wilson,
James M'Comb,	J. Alexander,
Thomas Mostyn,	Alexander Searson,
Robert Bradshaw,	Charles M'Kinney,
William Caldbeck,	William M'Ilwrath,
Val. Joyce,	John Murdock,
George Wells, Jun.	William Dawson,
Francis Barron,	John Elliott,
Henry Haslett,	William Watson,
James M'Kain,	William Burgess,
Shem Thompson,	Waddell Cunningham,

* There was another draft of the above document, dated the 17th March, in the possession of Mr. M'Cracken, which was lost.

James Ferguson, Jun.
John Neilson,
James Hyndman,
George Joy,
John Stevenson,
John S. Ferguson,
Charles Lewis,
James Fitzgerald,
William Thompson,
Francis Joy,
Robert Murray,
James Arthur,
William Wilson,
Andrew Hyndman,
Samuel Robinson,
William Ware,
William Lyons,
J. Tisdall,
James Cleland,
John Callwell,
Alexander Sutherland,
Robert Hodgson,
Alexander Holmes,
Richard Seed,
Cr. Salmon,
David Dinsmore,
Samuel Stewart,
Thomas Harden,
James Martin,
Samuel Ferguson,
Francis Wilson,
Roger Mulholland,
John Barker,
Robert Watt M'Clure,
James Corry,
Robert M'Cormick,
John Boyle,
David M'Tear,
Thomas M'Comb,
John Park,
Thomas Lyons,
Hu. Harrison,
James Cunningham,
Baptist Johnston,
Hu. Crawford,
Robert Hyndman,
John Moore,
Thomas Sinclair, Jun.
John Bullock,
Roger M'Clum,
Alexander Arthur,
John Matthews,
William Magee,
John Burden,
Francis M'Cracken,
William Callwell,
David Tomb,
Hu. Warren,
James Graham,
Thomas Kirkpatrick,
William Byrtt,
William Milford,
Hugh Dunlop,
John Gowan,
Richard Maitland,
James Stevenson,
William Auckinleck,
Edward Harrison,
John Logan,
Hugh Lyndon,
John Miller,
Thomas M'Cadam,
James H. Fletcher,
Richard Armstrong,
Alexander M'Ilwrath,
Andrew Neilson,
Joseph Wilson,
William M'Ketterick,
Charles Boswell,
James Murray,
Marcus Ward,
Robert M'Cleary,
John Stewart,
Thomas Frazer,
Alexander Anderson,
Hugh Willoughby Toft,
William Bryson,
Hugh Sloan,
Andrew Hannah,
Sampson Clark,
John Griffith,
James Liddon,
Henry Shaw,
James M'Pherson,
William Spencer,
Thos. Ludford Stewart,
Alexander Petherow,
Francis Davis,
David Logan,
William Crymble,

Thomas Clonnes,
George Kelso,
Terry Fitzgibbon,
John Gowdy,
William Emerson,
James Kennedy,
Thos. Wm. Betterton,
James Henry."

Irish Volunteer Medals.

Ballymacscanlon Rangers Medal, 1780.

The First Ulster Regiment Medal, 1787.

Templemore Light Dragoons Medal, 1784.

"We whose names are hereunto subscribed, inhabitants of the town of Belfast, actuated by the same motives expressed in the annexed association, do hereby join therein under the conditions and obligations therein mentioned, in the capacity of a body for exercising and fighting the Artillery intended for the First Company of Belfast Volunteers.

Given under our hands this 6th day of July, 1778.

Hugh Henderson,
Daniel Boyd,
James Boyd,
James Bell,
Robert Steele,
Robert Torrens,
Thomas Ash,
Hugh Hawthorn,
Alexander Fidlie,
David Dunn,
Hugh Dickson,
John M'Cracken,
William Scott,
William Hilditch,
James Bashford,
John M'Cormick."

The Artillery Company never purchased uniform. The Earl of Donegal, presented each of the three Belfast Companies with two brass field-pieces (six-pounders). two of which, belonging to the second company, were used by the people at the battle of Antrim, and taken by the military; the other four were given up to General Nugent, in 1798. The first uniform of the Volunteers of 1778, was scarlet with black velvet facings; five or six years later, it was changed to green with white facings, and in 1793, to yellow with white facings.

It is the fashion to assert that nothing but loyalty animated the Volunteers, and treason only, and the influence of French politics, the United Irishmen. It may be asserted, without fear of contradiction, it was something less than loyalty alone, and something more than fear of invasion at all, that animated Ireland, and arrayed its spirit in the volunteer associations, when the voice from America was shouting " Liberty !" across the Atlantic, and a little later, when the first dawn of the revolution in France was beginning to dazzle the eyes of our long benighted country. It was the wrongs of Ireland which armed " its fears of French invasion": it was the undue influence exercised over its legislative rights that caused its people to demonstrate their loyalty at the head of an army over which his Majesty's government had no control; and it was to make a single demonstration of the strength of their effective force, and the martial vigour of their collective wisdom, that they called together a national convention, first in Dungannon, and afterwards in Dublin. In the former place, on February 15th, 1782, two hundred delegates of the Volunteers, in their military uniform and accoutrements, marched two by two to the Protestant church of Dungannon, and there, after many days' deliberation, they agreed upon that celebrated declaration of their rights, which procured for Ireland the transitory, the illusory independence of her parliament. The views of the British minister, in reference to that measure, were rightly appreciated and characterized by Flood, when the declaration was made in parliament, purporting to be a message from the King, through the secret-

ary, "that mistrusts and jealousies had arisen in Ireland, and that it was highly necessary to take the same into immediate consideration, in order to a final adjustment". On that occasion, to put the Duke of Portland's sincerity beyond a doubt, his friend, Mr. Ponsonby, took upon him to answer for his Grace, that "he would use his utmost influence in obtaining the rights of Ireland, an object on which he had fixed his heart".

It appears there was one man at least in that house who doubted the sincerity of the minster—and that man was Flood, to whose public character Lord Charlemont's biographer has done great injustice, and to whose views as a statesman, those of his great rival, Grattan, can bear no comparison, whatever superiority the fidelity of his attachment to his country may give him over his rival.

That Flood was right in his scepticism, and Grattan wrong in his credulity, the event fully proved. In 1799, the same Duke of Portland openly avowed, that "he never considered the independence of the Irish Parliament a final adjustment".

It is perfectly evident that Pitt, from the moment he came into power, never ceased to regard that independence as a measure which had been unconstitutionally extorted, and at any hazard, cost, or sacrifice, was "to be re-captured". The course of the Irish Parliament on the regency question still more strongly fixed his determination. The incaution of that great and noble Irishman, our illustrious Grattan, enabled Pitt to place his finger on a flaw in the title to our Parliamentary independence, while an oversight in the Place Bill—the favourite bantling, as it has been called, of Grattan's patriotism—enabled the minister to pack that suicidal Parliament.

From the period of the Duke of Portland's unexpected announcement of the intention of the British Government to concede the demand of parliamentary independence to Ireland, the great intellect of Grattan appeared to sink under the obligation, and, to use his own words on another occasion, he "had given back in sheepish gratitude the whole advantage". After the speech of the viceroy was read on that occasion, Mr. Grattan, in seconding the address, observed: "I should desert every principle upon which I moved the former address, did I not bear testimony to the candid and unqualified manner in which the address has been answered by the Lord Lieutenant's speech of this day. I understand that Great Britain gives up, in toto, every claim to authority over Ireland. I have not the least idea in repealing the 6th of George the First, that Great Britain should be bound to make any declaration that she had formerly usurped a power. No; this would be a foolish caution—a dishonourable condition: the nation that insists

upon the humiliation of another, is a foolish nation. Another part of great magninimity in the conduct of Great Britain is, that everything is given up unconditionally; this must for ever remove suspicion"—"Commons Debates", vol. 20.

So far from giving up "in toto" every claim to authority over Ireland, the British Minister distinctly stated, that "internal interference with the Irish Parliament would no longer be attempted, but the right of external legislation remained unchanged". If the independence of the Irish Parliament was intended to be permanent, the repeal alone of the 6th of George the First, which made it legal to bind Ireland by English acts of Parliament, was inadequate to the final settlement of the question; the renunciation of the right for legislating for Ireland was requisite; and that right not being renounced, the simple repeal of an act in violation of it, so far "for ever from removing suspicion", left very great reason to fear a repetition of it whenever the suppression of the Volunteers deprived the country of the strength that had rendered her claims irresistible.

In the debate on this question, Flood ably pointed out the insufficiency of the repeal of the 6th of George the First. Notwithstanding the laudable acquiescence which appeared in the renunciation of English claims, "who could engage", he said, "that the present administration might not at some future time change its mind ? The English House of Commons asserted a right to external legislation, and he who seconded the motion on the Irish question, did not give up that right, but as a matter of convenience and compact". A very able exposure of the illusory independence of the Irish Parliament was made in the debate on that measure, by Mr. Walsh, a barrister, he said: "With regard to the repeal of the 6th George the First, I rely on it as a lawyer, that it is inadequate to the emancipation of Ireland. This act is merely a declaratory law; it declares that England has a power to make laws to bind Ireland. What then does the repeal of this law do with respect to Ireland ?—simply this, and not a jot more: it expunges the declaration of the power from the English statute book, but it does not deny the power to make laws hereafter to bind Ireland, whenever England shall think herself in sufficient force for the purpose. I call upon the King's new attorney-general, to rise in his place and declare whether the assumed and usurped power of England to bind Ireland, will not remain untouched and unrelinquished, though the 6th of George the First should be repealed ?"—"With respect to the fine-spun distinction of the English Minister, Mr. Fox, between external and internal legislation, it seems to me the most absurd position that could possibly be laid down, when applied to an independent people. See how pregnant this doctrine of Mr.

Fox is with every mischief, nay with absolute destruction to this country; the Parliament of Ireland can make laws for their internal regulation; that is, he gives us leave to tax ourselves, he permits us to take the money out of our purses for the convenience of England. But as to external legislation, there Great Britain presides; in anything that relates to commerce, to the exportation of our produce, there Great Britain can make laws to bind Ireland". "Ireland", continued Mr. Walsh, "is independent, or she is not; if she is independent, no power on earth can make laws to bind her externally or internally, save the King, Lords and Commons of Ireland; I therefore again repeat it, that until England unequivocally declares, by an act of her own legislature, that she has no power to make laws to bind Ireland, the assumed and usurped power of English legislation over this country is not relinquished".

The Recorder, Sir Samuel Bradstreet, forcibly pointed out the absurdity of that part of Mr. Grattan's address, "that there will no longer exist any constitutional question between the two nations that can disturb their mutual tranquillity"; he instanced the recent embargo, the possibility of another, the fact of the oaths taken that day by the Irish Secretary being under an English law, and the Speaker himself sitting in the chair under an English law: "were not these matters", he asked, "subjects for constitutional inquiry, and could any man say that the consideration of them might not interrupt the harmony between the two kingdoms ?" To all these arguments Mr. Grattan replied, "An honourable gentleman supposes that England will again assume this power when she can find herself able; but that supposition must lose all weight from the solemn surrender England has made of this assumed power".

Thus did this great man allow his reason to become the dupe of a generous credulity, and by the power of his unrivalled eloquence he was enabled to carry away the sober judgment of the House, with the honourable exception of four dissentient votes. The division on the address determined the fate of Irish independence; there were two hundred and eleven ayes for Mr. Grattan's motion, and four votes against it.

This illusory phantom of national independence pointed out the way to parliamentary reform and Catholic emancipation, and these objects haunted the minds of the Irish people long after the expiring efforts of the Volunteers had ceased to be a mockery to the pride or hopes of Ireland. All the energy of the nation concentrated in that volunteer association, had been expended in obtaining this nominal independence, and had precluded its successful employment in the struggle for reform. The people, on the disbanding of the Volunteers, discovered that they had been deceived,

that the nominal independence of an unreformed parliament was worse than illusory, that the evils which sprung from it had become irremediable by ordinary means. Grattan himself found out, but when it was too late, that all his labours for the independence of Ireland, had only served to make the influence of the Irish Parliament a monopoly for an unprincipled faction, and its power and patronage the private property of a family hostile to the interests of the nation.

There can be no doubt that the inadequate measures taken by Grattan for the security of the independence of the parliament, was the cause of the rebellion in 1798; and little did he imagine, when he reviled the actors in it in his place in parliament, that all the blood that was shed in that struggle was spilt either in defence of the principles on which he advocated national independence, or in the re-conquest of that independence on the part of England, which he had imperfectly achieved.

In the first stage of the proceedings of the convention at Dungannon, the constitutional legality of the proceedings of deliberating soldiers was defended on the principle of the English revolution, namely, "on the people's right of preparatory resistance to unconstitutional oppression". Its members asserted, by their first resolution, "that a citizen by learning the use of arms does not abandon any of his civil rights". Their other resolutions were expressive of their wrongs, and resolutely indicative of their disposition to redress them. The patriotism that dictated them was evident enough, but the manifestation of loyalty was by no means conspicuous.. The invasion panic had afforded a pretext for putting arms into the hands of the advocates, first of national independence, and then of parliamentary reform; the Dungannon convention effected the former by its declaration of the 15th February, 1782.

On the 1st of July, at the Ulster meeting of the Volunteer Delegates at Lisburn, an address to the army on the subject of parliamentary reform was issued, signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Sharman, Colonel Rowley, and others, calling on that loyal army to assemble with the same spirit of loyalty, patriotism, and firmness, which actuated them on the memorable 15th February, 1782, "to deliberate on the most constitutional means of procuring a more equal representation of the people in the Parliament of Ireland". And not the least singular circumstance in this requisition to the Irish soldiery to deliberate, sword in hand, on the most constitutional means of obtaining parliamentary reform, is to find that, in advocating the necessity for it, it is stated in the requisition, that "it was warmly supported by that con-

summate statesman, the Earl of Chatham, and revived by the heir to his abilities and name, the present William Pitt".

At the meeting of the celebrated Dungannon convention, 8th September, 1783 (Colonel Robert Stewart having been called to the chair, vacated by Colonel J. Stewart), a communication was read from the 1st regiment of the Irish Brigade, dated 15th February, 1782, which concluded in these terms:—"At this great crisis, when the western world, while laying the foundation of a rising empire, temptingly holds out a system of equal liberty to mankind, and waits with open arms to receive the emigrants from surrounding nations, we think it a duty we owe to our country, to promote, as far as our example can reach, an affectionate coalition of the inhabitants of Ireland. Animated by this sentiment, and convinced that national unanimity is the basis of national strength, this regiment affords a striking instance how far the spirit of toleration can unite men of all religious descriptions in one great object—the support of a free constitution".*

The next most remarkable meeting of the Volunteers, was that of the Delegates from the "Volunteer Army of Leinster", which sat on the 9th October, 1783, at the Royal Exchange, Dublin, Lord Charlemont in the chair. It is a striking feature in the proceedings of the Volunteers, that, almost invariably, the first resolution at every meeting was, "that the present state of the representation of the people of this kingdom requires to be reformed". On this occasion Colonel Hatton opposed the resolution, and moved one to the effect: "That it is only through the medium of the legislature that we do hope for constitutional redress".† "This brought on (says the history I have already quoted) a debate, in the course of which it was urged, 'that the sacred majesty of the people was, in all times, fully competent to correct the abuses which might arise in the constitution, and to control and direct that branch of the legislature to which they had only delegated a power, but which interposition on the part of the people, it was allowed to be impolitic to exercise, save only on the most important occasions'"; and, in support of this doctrine, the secretary urged the authority of the celebrated Dr. Jebb, etc. The resolution, however, of Colonel Hatton, materially amended by Counsellor Michael Smith, was eventually carried.

On the 10th November, 1783, the grand National Convention met at the Royal Exchange, Dublin, and subsequently adjourned to the Rotundo, Lord Charlemont in the chair, and continued to meet till the 2nd of December, 1783. The

* "History of the Proceedings and Debates of the Volunteer Delegates", p. 13.

† Idem, p. 17.

sub-committee of the Convention, consisting of one delegate for each city and county, by whom the business of the Convention was regulated, chose Colonel the Right Honourable Robert Stewart for their chairman.

On the 21st of November, the chairman of the sub- committee reported to the convention a series of resolutions of that committee, on the subject of reform, to the following effect:

"That it was the unanimous opinion of the committee, that no non-resident elector should be permitted to vote for any representative in Parliament, unless his right of voting arose from landed property of £20 per annum.

"That no elector be deemed a resident, who had not resided for six months in the year previous to the day of issuing the writ for the election, and unless that borough, town, or city, had been his usual place of residence during the period of his registry.

"That the sheriff of each county do appoint a deputy, to take the poll in each barony on the same day.

"That all depopulated places, or decayed boroughs, which had hitherto returned representatives, by an extension of the franchise to the neighbouring barony, be enabled to return representatives to Parliament.

"That every borough, town, or city, which hitherto had returned representatives, be deemed decayed, which did not contain two hundred electors, over and above potwallopers, according to the plan for the province of Leinster, and should cease to return representatives till the aforesaid number of electors be supplied.

"That every Protestant, possessed of a freehold, shall have a right to vote for members to serve in Parliament for such city, town, or borough.

"That any bye-law made by a corporation to contract the franchise, shall be declared illegal.

"That every Protestant possessed of a leasehold of the yearly value of £10, in any city, town, or borough, not decayed, for thirty-one years or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, be entitled to vote; and every Protestant in any decayed city, town, or borough, having a leasehold of £5 yearly value, for thirty-one years, ten of which are unexpired, be permitted to vote.

"That every freeholder of 40s. per annum, in any decayed city, town, or borough, be entitled to vote.

"That the duration of Parliament ought not to exceed the term of three years.

"That all suffrages be given 'viva voce', and not by ballot.

"That any person holding a pension, except for life, or under the term of twenty-one years, be incapable of sitting

in parliament; and if for life or twenty-one years, should vacate his seat, but be capable of re-election.

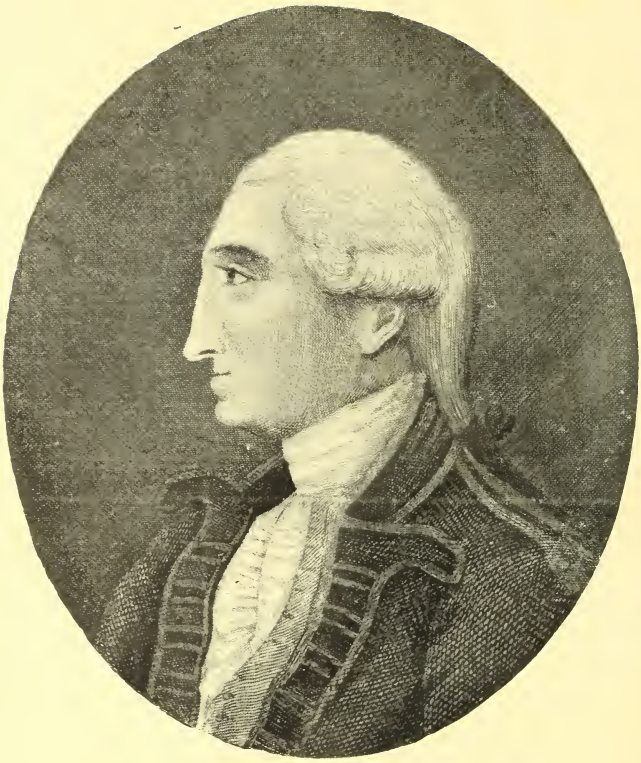
"That any member accepting office under the crown, do vacate his seat, but be capable of re-election.

"That every member, before he took his seat, should take an oath that he has not, nor any other person for him, with his knowledge or consent, given meat, drink, money, place or employment, or any consideration, for any expenses whatsoever voters may have been at for procuring votes at his election; and do further swear, that he will not suffer any person to hold any place or pension in trust for him while he serves in Parliament.

"And, lastly, that any person convicted of perjury by a jury, relative to above oath, be incapable of ever sitting in Parliament".*

Such was the plan of reform submitted to the convention by the chairman of its sub-committee, the Right Honourable Robert Stewart; and, though not "the first whig", one might suppose there was something prophetic in the definition of the term that had reference to Irish politics, when it turns out that Lord Castlereagh was the first reformer in 1783. This plan of reform, with the exception of two sittings, in which the claims of the Catholics to the elective franchise were discussed and scouted by the assembly, occupied the attention of the Convention during the whole time it sat, till the 2nd of December, the day of its dissolution, and, it may be added, the date of the downfall of the Volunteer association. The National Convention, which assembled in Dublin, the 10th of November, 1783, consisted of three hundred delegates, who represented one hundred and fifty thousand Volunteers. The Volunteer grenadiers attended as a guard on the Convention during its sittings; the delegates were escorted into town by troops of armed citizens; the firing of twenty-one cannon announced the commencement of their proceedings. The various battalions proceeded from the Exchange to the Rotundo, the seat of the Convention, in grand military array, displaying amongst their banners the national standard of Ireland, and devices and mottoes on their flags which were not to be mistaken. Broad green ribbons were worn across the shoulders of the delegates, and according to Barrington, the lawyers even acknowledged the supreme power of the will of the people—the motto on their buttons was, "Vox populi suprema lex est".

* "History of the Volunteer Convention", p. 49.



HENRY FLOOD, Born in 1732, Educated at Trinity College, Dublin, and Christ Church, Oxford. Entered the Irish Parliament, as Member for Kilkenny, in 1759. He accepted the post of Vice-Treasurer of Ireland in 1775, but was removed from that office in 1781 owing to his hostility towards the Government policy of the day. In 1782 he supported Grattan's demand for an independent legislature, and in the following year he took up the question of "simple repeal" and came into violent contact with his great rival, Henry Grattan. Towards the end of 1783 he entered the English House of Commons, but his career there was a failure. He died at Farmley, in Co. Kilkenny, on December 2nd, 1791. Curran says "Flood was immeasurably the greatest man of his time in Ireland."

This national convention of armed citizens was assembled within sight of the Irish House of Parliament, and both these parliaments were sitting at the same time, and the leading popular gentlemen who were members of both, went from one assembly to the other, as the affairs under deliberation required their presence in either house. Lord Charlemont, the chairman of the Convention, we are told by Hardy, spoke of the majority of the members as "men of rank and fortune, and many of them members of Parliament, lords and commoners". No sooner had the chairman taken his seat, than innumerable plans of reform were presented, which to Lord Charlemont and his biographer appeared all utterly impracticable; "so rugged and so wild in their attire" were they, " as to look" not like the "inhabitants of the Earth, and yet were on it": and yet "this motley band of incongruous fancies", as the latter terms them, "of misshapen theories, valuable only if efficient, or execrable if efficacious", contained a vast number of proposals for parliamentary reformation, which, in the course of half a century, have been found not only plausible but practicable suggestions, and have been of late years carried into execution. Mr. Flood's plan of reform was at length adopted by the convention. The Bishop of Derry then brought forward his resolution in favour of the immediate and complete emancipation of the Roman Catholics, and the good and virtuous Lord Charlemont strenuously and successfully resisted the resolution ! To this same bishop the noble earl replied, in defending himself from the charge of being a lukewarm reformer, "that in the struggle for an independent parliament, he had been willing to risk his life, and, what was far more important—the peace of his country, but for reform he was willing to do everything not inconsistent with the public peace". There were many in that assembly who did not participate in the sentiments of Lord Charlemont, and his lordship well knew it, for he trembled for the result of their determinations, and at last had recourse to a subterfuge for obtaining a final adjournment of the Convention. The House of Commons, during the sitting of the Convention, had refused Flood's motion for leave to bring in a bill for a reform of parliament, on the ground of its emanating from a body illegally constituted. Mr. Fitzgibbon openly and violently denounced the Volunteers, and his denunciations were compared by Curran "to the ravings of a maniac and an incendiary". The language of Fitzgibbon was of a very different description, when, carried away by the stream of patriotism at the close of the struggle for parliamentary independence, he addressed the House of Commons, to the astonishment of its members, in terms that might have been expected from a Lucas or a Molyneux: " No man", said he, " can say that the Duke of Portland has power to

grant us that redress which the nation unanimously demands; but as Ireland is committed, no man, I trust, will shrink from her support, but go through hand and heart in the establishment of our liberties: and as I was cautious in committing myself, so am I now firm in asserting the rights of my country. My declaration therefore is, that as the nation has determined to obtain the restoration of her liberty, it behoves every man in Ireland to stand firm! ! !*" The language of abuse a few years later was new to the Volunteers. Hitherto they had been accustomed to constant commendation: every year they received the unanimous thanks of parliament, the king applauded their loyalty, the whole country rang with their praises; but the government looked on their proceedings with the most serious apprehensions; as they had regarded their origin as an evil that was only to be tolerated because it could not for the time being be conveniently resisted or violently opposed. It was determined to make their own leaders their executioners, and for this purpose they contrived, in the first instance, to disarm the opposition of Lord Charlemont to their designs, by artful representations of apprehensions from the intemperance of his rival brethern in the Convention, especially of the Bishop of Derry and Flood, and by insidious assurances of confidence in his loyalty and enlightened patriotism. Lord Charlemont was the best and most honest of men, but in public matters he carried the refinement of a man of elegant manners to the extreme verge of plastic courtesy; as a man of honour, no earthly bribe could have caused him to swerve from his principles; as a courtier, the smiles of a viceroy or the blandishments of a minister might have caused him to listen far too attentively to the suggestions of those in power. The proceedings in the House of Commons on the rejection of the Reform Bill, brought the question of the loyalty of the Volunteer Convention to an issue. It was now a crisis, which left no alternative but resistance or dissolution. The chairman dared not propose a dissolution; he proposed an adjournment till the Monday following, when they were to meet at the usual hour. On the Monday, accordingly, he repaired to the Rotundo at an earlier hour than usual; after passing some resolutions, he and a few of the partizans who accompanied him, dissolved the Convention. On the arrival of the great body of the delegates, they found the doors closed, they learned with astonishment that the Convention was

* A singular commentary on these opinions is to be found in the speech of this gentleman on the Union, in which he declares that he never ceased urging the necessity on the British Minister of the impracticability of the measure of Irish parliamentary independence, "for the last seven years".—Vide "Earl of Clare's speech on the Union". By Authority, 1800.

dissolved, and when it was too late, they discovered they had been deceived by their general. From this time the power of the Volunteers was broken. The Government resolved to let the institution die a natural death—at least to aim no blow at it in public; but when it was known that the Hon. Colonel Robert Stewart, afterwards Lord Castlereagh, was not only a member of the Convention (a delegate for the County Down),but a chairman of the sub-committee, and that he was the intimate friend of Lord Charlemont, the nature of the hostility that Government put in practice against the institution will be easily understood. While the Volunteers were parading before Lord Charlemont, or manifesting their patriotism in declarations of resistance to the parliament, perfidy was stalking in their camp, and it rested not till it had trampled on the ashes of their institution.

Of the esteem in which Lord Charlemont held Colonel Robert Stewart, we may judge by his letters: in one he says—"I have seen Robert, and have given him but little comfort with regard to his friend's administration. I cannot but love him; yet why is he so be-Pitted ?"

The first proclamation against the Volunteers of the Lord Lieutenant, the Earl of Westmoreland, was issued the 11th of March,1790, denouncing lawless and seditious proceedings which had taken place in the town of Belfast, on the plea that the object of the said armed bodies was redress of alleged grievances, but that the obvious intention of most of them appeared to be to overawe the parliament and the government, and to dictate to both.

"And whereas these dangerous and seditious proceedings tend to the disturbance of the public peace, the obstruction of good order and government, to the great injury of public credit, and the subversion of the constitution, and have raised great alarms in the minds of his Majesty's loyal subjects.

"And we do charge and command the magistrates, sheriffs, bailiffs, and other peace-officers, having jurisdiction within the said town of Belfast, and the several districts adjacent thereto, to be careful in preserving the peace within the same, and to disperse all seditious and unlawful assemblies; and if they shall be resisted, to apprehend the offenders, that they may be dealt with according to law.

"(Signed) FITZGIBBON, etc., etc., etc."

In compliance with the proclamation, the Volunteers ceased to parade or any longer to appear in military array.

The Catholics, who had flocked to the standard of the Volunteers on the first cry of French invasion, were groaning under the tyranny of the penal laws, and, at the prospect

of a deliverance, one cannot wonder at "their patriotism catching fire at the Presbyterian altar of parliamentary reform". But, when they discovered the bigoted opposition of the leader to their claims—when the Earl of Charlemont publicly resisted the restoration of the elective franchise to the Catholics, and the national convention had the folly to let their prejudices defeat their interests, by withholding from the Catholics (the great bulk of the people) their just rights, the hopes of the latter were destroyed; their attachment to the cause of the Volunteers declined, and when the last blow was struck at the existence of this force, the Catholic population of Ireland looked on with unconcern; and never did an institution, so big with the highest political importance, dwindle away into such insignificance, and fall so little regretted by the majority of the people.

The services of the Volunteers are, on the whole, greatly exaggerated by our historians; the great wonder is, how little substantial good to Ireland was effected by a body which was capable of effecting so much. As a military national spectacle, the exhibition was, indeed, imposing, of a noble army of united citizens roused by the menance of danger to the state, and, once mustered, standing forth in defence of the independence of their country. But it is not merely the spectacle of their array, but the admirable order, conduct, and discipline of their various corps—not for a short season of political excitement, but for a period of nearly ten years—that, even at this distance of time, are with many a subject of admiration. Their admirers certainly did not exaggerate their utility as preservers of the public peace, when they asserted, at one of the last resolutions passed at the dissolution of the Convention, that, through "their means, the laws and police of this kingdom had been better executed and maintained, than at any former period within the memory of man". But what use did the friends and advocates of popular rights make of this powerful association of armed citizens, which paralyzed the Irish government, and brought the British ministry to a frame of mind very different to that which it hitherto exhibited towards Ireland ? Why, they wielded this great weapon of a nation's collected strength to obtain an illusory independence, which never could rescue the Irish Parliament from the influence of the British minister without reform, and which left the parliament as completely in the power of the minister, through the medium of his hirelings in that House, as it had been before that shadow of parliamentary independence had been gained. The only change was in the mode of using that influence in the Parliament; the material difference was but between an open and a secret interference in its concerns. The other adjuncts to this acquisition were, a Place Bill and a Pension Bill, which had been the

stock in trade of the reforming principle of the opposition for many years. No great measure of parliamentary reform, or Catholic emancipation, was seriously entertained, or wrung from a reluctant but then feeble government. The error of the leaders was, in imagining that they could retain the confidence of the Catholics, or the co-operation of that body, which constituted the great bulk of the population, while their Convention publicly decided against their admission to the exercise of the elective franchise. At the great Leinster meeting of the Volunteer delegates, in October, 1783, the first serious attempt to force the claims of the Catholics on the delegates were made by Mr. Burrowes. He said: "He was instructed to move the extension of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, whose behaviour had manifested their attachment to the constitution. He was surprised to find some gentlemen averse to entering upon the subject; he was afraid an idea would go abroad that they were not to receive the power of voting for representatives in parliament. It would be an idea of the most fatal nature, and gentlemen should consider that their resolution on this important question would, in all probability, affect that assembly more even than it would the Roman Catholics themselves".

Another delegate, Mr. Fitzgerald, asked, "Did the Convention, when seeking freedom, mean to make freemen of one million of subjects, and to keep two millions slaves ?" Mr. Burrowes was compelled to withdraw his resolution; another was substituted, of a more general nature, by Major M'Cartney, namely, "That the extension of the elective franchise to the Catholics is a measure of the highest importance, and worthy the attention of the National Convention". But even this resolution had also to be withdrawn.

In the grand National Convention that sat in Dublin, the claims of the Catholics to the exercise of the elective franchise were refused to be entertained. An honourable delegate undertook, on the part of the Catholics, to object to that boon for them; that "they were so grateful for the great concessions already made to their body, that they could not think of asking for the elective franchise". This assertion was solemnly made by Mr. George Ogle, as he stated, on the part of Lord Kenmare and others of his particular friends of the Catholic persuasion; and it was gravely listened to by the enlightened legislating Volunteers: its moderation was highly commended, and it was in vain that a delegate, who appeared to have some common sense and some liberality, which was by no means common in that assembly, replied, that he could not think "the Roman Catholics were like the Cappadocians, who prayed for slavery". The Bishop of Derry, on the part of the recog-

nized agents of the Catholic body, submitted to the Convention the following document, in disavowal of the sentiments imputed to them:

"At a meeting of the general committee of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, Sir P. Bellew, Bart., in the chair, it was unanimously resolved that the message relating to us, delivered this morning to the National Convention, was totally unknown to and unauthorized by us.

"That we do not so widely differ from the rest of mankind, as by our own act to prevent the removal of our shackles.

"That we will receive with gratitude every indulgence that may be extended to us by the Legislature, and are thankful to our benevolent countrymen for their efforts on our behalf".

This was tolerably explicit; but the medium of communication between Lord Kenmare and Mr. Ogle—Sir Boyle Roche—was one which must have reminded the Convention of the mental fallibility of that great bottle conjuror, who contended that every quart bottle should be made to hold a quart. The delegates said they did not know which of the declarations of the Catholics to believe; and, as the Catholics disagreed among themselves on the subject, they deemed it best not to decide upon it. Accordingly, in the plan of reform drawn up by their sub-committee, the chairman of which was Colonel Robert Stewart, good care was taken to exclude the Catholics from the elective franchise, by the heading of the different resolutions, viz: "That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of", etc., etc., etc. The sentiments of Lord Charlemont, no doubt, had considerable influence over the assembly; his character gave a factitious importance to his bigotry. His hostility to the claims of the Catholics had all the consistency of Lord Clare's without the savageness of its spirit. Even ten years subsequent to this period, his lordship voted in Parliament against the extension of the elective franchise to the Catholics, thus contradicting, most absurdly, his own principles and those of the National Convention, which prompted their appeal for "a full and adequate representation of the people in Parliament", while, by excluding the Catholics, they virtually deprived the great majority of the people of that privilege.

Lord Charlemont probably was influenced by the opinions, or rather prejudices, of the celebrated Doctor Lucas, whose political views he adopted, and did not presume to deviate from them in the smallest degree. Lucas, like all his brother patriots of that time, was an uncompromising bigot. At a period when the unfortunate Catholics were crushed by oppression, this popular brawler about the independence of parliament was reviling his Catholic countrymen with the

bitterest invective in his "Barber's Letters," and assisting, by his illiberal abuse, to forge new chains for the great body of the Irish people. All the patriotism of Lucas and his followers was expended on the parliament—they had none to devote to men who were not Protestants.

I am not writing a history of the Volunteers, or of the insurrection which succeeded the disbanding of that body; but it is necessary for me, in attempting to trace the motives of those who took a part in that insurrection, to inquire into the causes of the failure and ultimate fall of the Volunteer association; of the errors which deprived them of the confidence of the people; and lastly, to discover the origin of that insurrection, to find what objects it had in view at its commencement, and how far such objects differed from those of the Volunteers.

Without these inquiries, to consider the insurrection of 1798 as a mere isolated movement of the people at that period—as simply one of those periodical outbreaks of sedition, which mark an era of famine or oppression every forty or fifty years in the annals of Irish history—as a secret conspiracy suddenly concocted, on the spurt of the pressure of some particular grievance, unconnected with preceding events, and uninfluenced by them—would be to form a very erroneous opinion of the nature and causes of that insurrection, and consequently a very erroneous opinion of those engaged in it.

The principles advocated by the leading members of the Volunteer associations, the doctrines boldly promulgated by the political clubs in Ireland, and the language of the early champions of reform in parliament, from the period of 1782 to the dissolution of the Volunteer association, had roused the minds of the Irish people to the highest pitch of political excitement. It was only when the Volunteers had been disbanded, and the real worthlessness of the nominal independence of the Irish parliament began to be known; when the principal members of the Whig Club had seceded, and the patriotism of other similar societies had ceased to inspire confidence; when the avowed reformers of 1782 had become the declared opponents of reform, and when those who still lingered on the opposition benches of both parliaments, frightened at their own principles, and deterred from the maintenance of them by the excesses of the French Revolution, made but a feeble show of adherence to them, or waited in silence for happier times for their support—that people began to despair of obtaining or defending their rights by constitutional means: it was then only that the deserted principles of the Volunteers—the unsupported doctrines of the Whig Club—the relinquished or discomfited plans of the political societies, and the abandoned cause of parliamentary reform, were taken up by a new political

society, and that the United Irishmen acted on the speeches, writings, and the stirring sentiments of the early reformers of both countries—of Pitt, Stewart, the Duke of Richmond, Colonel Sharman, Flood, Grattan, and their liberal cotemporaries.

The society of United Irishmen was called into existence to adopt the principles of parliamentary reform, which had been abandoned at that period—by some in disgust, by others in despair, and by many who had been prominent, but never honest, in the cause. Those principles did not originate with the United Irishmen, but were advocated, to the extreme of democratic doctrines, by Pitt himself, and even by the moderate and good Lord Charlemont, whose loyalty has never been impugned, and by Flood and Grattan, whose prudence at least would have preserved themselves from the consequences of actual sedition.

The origin of the Irish Volunteers, which as an organized national military association, may be dated from 1777, ceased to exist as such in 1793. Its last effort was in Belfast, in defending the town from the earliest revival, at least in that century, of the dragooning system, by four troops of the 17th regiment, on the 15th of March, 1793.*

It is not inconsistent with truth, though it may be with the military glory of this institution of the Volunteers, to say that it combined in one great national phalanx the talent, the intolerance, the chivalry, the extravagance, the prodigality, the embarrassment, the republicanism, and patriotism, for one brief epoch, of all ranks and classes. Here we find the ill-assorted names of the Earl of Charlemont and the Right Hon. Robert Stewart—of John Claudius Beresford and Henry Grattan—of Toler and Ponsonby—of Saurin and Flood—of Colonel Rowley and Major Sandys—of Ireland's only Duke and Sir Capel Molyneux—of the rabid zealot, Dr. Patrick Duigenan, and the right reverend ultra-liberal the Bishop of Derry—of Archibald Hamilton Rowan and Jack Giffard—of the red-hot patriot, James Napper Tandy, and the facetious knight and slippery politician, Sir Jonah Barrington—and last, not least in celebrity, of George Robert Fitzgerald, of fighting notoriety, and Mr. Joseph Pollock, the great advocate of peace and order. These incongruous names are found jumbled together in the pages of the history of the Volunteer association. The world never saw an army of such heterogeneous materials collected from all conflicting parties for a patriotic purpose.

On the 1st of July, 1783, at the Ulster meeting of the Volunteer delegates at Lisburn, and address to the army, on the subject of parliamentary reform, was issued, signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Sharman, Colonel Rowley, and others,

* "Pieces of Irish History", 55.

calling on that loyal army to assemble with the same spirit of loyalty, patriotism, and firmness which actuated them on the memorable 15th February, 1786, "to deliberate on the most constitutional means of procuring a more equal representation of the people in the Parliament of Ireland". And not the least singular circumstance in this requisition to the Irish soldiery, to deliberate sword in hand on the most constitutional means of obtaining parliamentary reform, is to find that, in advocating the necessity for it, it is stated in the requisition, that "it was warmly supported by that consummate statesman, the Earl of Chatham, and revived by the heir to his abilities and name, the present William Pitt".

The first grand object of the United Irishmen—of that body, whose principles it is accounted treasonable to the loyal Volunteers to confound with theirs—was "to promote union amongst Irishmen of all religious denominations"; and the very principle, and even the words in which it is couched, the United Irishmen borrowed from the Volunteers. At the meeting of the celebrated Dungannon convention, 8th September, 1783 (Colonel Robert Stewart having been called to the chair, vacated by Colonel J. Stewart), a communication was read from the first regiment of the Irish Brigade, dated 15th February, 1782, which concluded in these terms: "At this great crisis, when the western world, while laying the foundation of a rising empire, temptingly holds out a system of equal liberty to mankind, and waits with open arms to receive the emigrants from surrounding nations, we think it a duty we owe to our country, to promote, as far as our example can reach, an affectionate coalition of the inhabitants of Ireland. Animated by this sentiment, and convinced that national unanimity is the basis of national strength, this regiment affords a striking instance how far the divine spirit of toleration can unite men of all religious descriptions in one great object, the support of a free constitution".*

This idea of general union is said to have originated with Theobald Wolfe Tone; but the merit or the demerit of its origin evidently belonged to the Volunteers, whom the King himself, and parliament, session after session, thanked for their devoted loyalty. When the meeting took place in Dungannon, in which the Irish people were told the western world was temptingly holding out a system of equal liberty to mankind, to profit by which these Volunteers declared it was necessary to unite men in Ireland, of all religious persuasions, for one common object, when this meeting took place, Tone was a loyal subject, and Colonel Robert Stewart

* "History of the Proceedings and Debates of the Volunteer Delegates", p. 13.

was the chairman of a meeting at which sedition was pretty plainly inculcated, in the example held forth of the successful struggle for American independence.

But, in the course of the extraordinary events of this world, Tone was sentenced to be hanged for attempting to carry into effect the project implied in the example so temptingly held forth, by "uniting men of all religious descriptions"; and Colonel Robert Stewart (subesquently Lord Castlereagh), who sanctioned with his presence the sedition of the sword-in-hand deliberators on reform, became a foremost man in those councils which consigned the United Irishmen to the gallows. The meeting I speak of was not an obscure county meeting—it was not what could be well called "a farce": the aggregate number of Volunteers represented at the meeting exceeded the regular military force of the whole country.*

The fears of Lord Charlemont, and the mistaken views of Grattan, in holding himself aloof from the proceedings of the convention of November, 1783, and depriving the question of reform of his powerful support, mainly contributed to accomplish the ruin of the Volunteer association. In thus declining to advance the cause of reform, the only chance was abandoned of maintaining the advantages which had already been acquired. It would seem at this period as if his great mind reposed under the shadow of the laurels that had been planted around a partial victory, and had become unconscious of the danger of leaving the security of the independence of Ireland to an unreformed parliament, under the secret supremacy of British influence. The Volunteer association, in fact, became a gorgeous pageant of national chivalry, to be remembered in after times with wonder at the power and the pomp it exhibited, and surprise at the insignificance of its results.

But Grattan, from the time he imagined he had gained his great object, turned away his face from the ladder by which "he upward climbed", and bid the Volunteers farewell—"the plumed troop and the big wars, that made ambition virtue"; "his occupation was gone". The wooden horse of national independence was received into Ireland, and the hands of the opposition were held forth for the "dona ferentes" of the British ministry. On the 5th of Mar., 1782, Grattan stated in the House of Commons—"he was far from saying that, under the present administration, independent gentlemen might not accept of places. He thought that places were now honourable, and in taking one he should be the friend of the people and of his Majesty's government. He had no personal knowledge of the Lord

* "History of the Proceedings and Debates of the Volunteer Delegates", p. 9.

Lieutenant; he was not acquainted with those about him; nay, if he had sent for him, he was persuaded he should have declined the honour of seeing him. But, as he believed him to be virtuous, so far he should have his free support".*

In 1785, Grattan discovered that the independence of the Irish parliament was but in name—that he had been deceived. The acknowledgment is made in plain and affecting terms, in his speech on the 12th of August, 1785, on the question of the final adjustment of the commercial intercourse between the two countries. To effect this adjustment, commissioners had been appointed in Ireland to arrange the basis with the British government: eleven resolutions were proposed and agreed upon. But when these propositions were brought forward by Mr. Pitt, ten new ones were found appended to them—nominally supplemental, but virtually striking at the very root of the independence of the Irish parliament. These were thrown into the heads of the bill introduced into the Irish House of Commons by Mr. Orde. In presenting that bill, Mr. Secretary Orde deprecated the idea of there being anything derogatory in its provisions to the constitution of the country, "which had been", he said, "repeatedly and recently recognized on the other side, and which, after so many full, open, and decided declarations made by Great Britain, there does not remain the least shadow of a reason for supposing she would be so wild, so absurd (I want words to express my abhorrence at the idea), so ungenerous as to attack". Such was the language of the Irish secretary of that day; and yet, even then, the Union was meditated, and, on the secretary's showing, the conduct of the British minister towards Ireland was wild, absurd, abhorrent, and ungenerous; and yet there are people who wonder at the events which followed. The wonder is, that any one should be affected by the remembrance of their causes, except with feelings of shame or sorrow.

Mr. Grattan endeavoured to stimulate the House to one great effort, to retrieve the error which left the independence of his country at the mercy of an administration adverse to its existence. There is a thrilling eloquence in the alternate appeals, on this occasion, to the pride and fears of his auditory, and he can have little sympathy with the sufferings of a noble mind, struggling ineffectually against predominant injustice, who can read this speech unmoved: one can trace the workings of the mind of the deceived patriot, in the stirring outbreaks of his indignation, and the mournful presentiment of impending evils breaking through the hopes he affected to feel, in order (vain effort !) to infuse a new spirit of liberty into the

* "Parliamentary Debates," Dublin, 1872.

breasts of his auditors. One is reminded, even by the change of circumstances which had taken place, of the triumph of the father of his country in 1782,—the idol of a nation's gratitude, the object of a senate's homage: proud of his success, yet ashamed of a suspicion of a jealous nation's sincerity in her acquiescence in it: ardent in his expectations, strong in his security, and, with generous confidence, disdaining to render that measure "humiliating to England", by calling for the renunciation of a power which had been usurped. And, within the short period of three years, we find his parliamentary influence gone, his popularity diminished; conscious, at last, of having been over-reached—deceived—by one party, and well aware that he is soon to be deserted, with a few honourable exceptions, by his own. It is impossible, without sentiments of mournful interest in the feelings of Grattan on that occasion, and of more than public sympathy for the adversity of public life, to read the following passages from the speech in question:—"Sir,—I can excuse the Right Hon. Member who moves you for leave to bring in the bill. He is an Englishman and contends for the power of his own country, while I am contending for the liberty of mine. His comment on the bill is of little moment; a Lord Lieutenant's secretary is an unsafe commentator on an Irish constitution. The Irish parliament is now called on to determine, that it is most expedient for Ireland to have no trade at all in these parts. This is not a surrender of the political rights of the constitution, but of the natural rights of man; not of the privileges of parliament, but of the rights of nations. Not to sail beyond the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan; an extensive interdict! Not only neutral countries excluded, and God's providence shut out in the most opulent boundaries of creation! Other interdicts go to a determinate period of time, but here is an eternity of restraint. This resembles rather an act of God than an act of the legislature, whether you measure it by immensity of space or infinity of duration, and has nothing human about it but its presumption. To proposals, therefore, so little warranted by the great body of the people of England, so little expected by the people of Ireland, so heedlessly suggested by the minister, and so dangerous to whatever is dear to your interest, honour, and freedom, I answer, No!—I plead past settlements, and I insist on the faith of nations. If, three years after the recovery of your freedom, you bend, your children, corrupted by your example, will surrender; but if you stand firm and inexorable, you make a seasonable impression on the people of England, you give a wholesome example to your children, you afford instruction to his Majesty's ministers, and make (as the old English did in the case of their charter) the attempt on

Irish liberty its confirmation and establishment. This bill goes to the extinction of the most invaluable part of your parliamentary capacity: it is an union, an incipient and a creeping union; a virtual union, establishing one will in the general concerns of commerce and navigation, and reposing that will in the parliament of Great Britain; an union, where our parliament preserves its existence after it has lost its authority, and our people are to pay for a parliamentary establishment, without any proportion of parliamentary representation. If any body of men can still think that the Irish constitution is incompatible with the British Empire—a doctrine which I abjure, as sedition against the connection— but, if any body of men are justified in thinking that the Irish constitution is incompatible with the British Empire, perish the Empire ! live the Constitution ! Reduced by this false dilemma to take a stand, my second wish is the British Empire; my first wish and bounden duty is the liberty of Ireland. Whence the American war ? whence the Irish restrictions ? whence the misconstruction, of suffering one country to regulate the trade and navigation of another, and of instituting under the name of general protectress, a proud domination, which sacrifices the interests of the whole to the ambition of a part, and arms the little passions of the monopolist with the sovereign potency of an imperial parliament ? for great nations, when cursed with unnatural sway, follow but their nature when they invade, and human wisdom has not better provided for human safety, than by limiting the principles of human power. We, the limited trustees of the delegated power, born for a particular purpose, limited to a particular time, and bearing an inviolable relationship to the people, who sent us to parliament, cannot break that relationship, counteract that purpose, surrender, diminish, or derogate from those privileges we breathe but to preserve. I rest on authority as well as principle—the authority on which the Revolution rests. Mr. Locke, in his chapter on the abolition of government, says, that the transfer of legislative power is the abolition of the state, not a transfer. If I am asked how we shall use the powers of the constitution ?—I say, for Ireland, with due regard to the British nation: let us be governed by the spirit of concord, and with fidelity to the connexion. But when the mover of this bill asks me to surrender those powers, I am astonished at him; I have neither ears, nor eyes, nor functions to make such a sacrifice. What ! that free trade for which we strained every nerve in 1779 ! that free constitution for which we pledged life and fortune in 1782 ! Our lives at the service of the empire; but our liberties ! No: we received them from our 'Father which is in Heaven', and we will hand them down to our children. In the mean time,

we will guard our free trade and free constitution as our only real resources; they were the struggles of great virtue, the result of much perseverance, and our broad base of public action".*

It is pretty evident that the Union, "the incipient, creeping Union", was, in Grattan's opinion, a project to be resisted to the last extremity: that the British government, in 1785, was inimical to the independence of Ireland, and that the Irish parliament was not to be relied on for its defence.

The Volunteers were no longer able or inclined to maintain what they had gained. They found they had wasted their strength on an object valueless without reform, and England was now in a condition to resist that measure.

They lingered on in military array, occasionally exhibiting, on a parade day, their diminished strength to their enemies—all that was left of their martial character, the trappings of their corps, at an annual review. In 1793, an order from government to disperse every assemblage of that body by military force, gave the death-blow to the Volunteers: they made one faint effort in Antrim for their last review; the army was marched out of Belfast to prevent its taking place, and, in prudently, giving up the review, the great body of the citizen-soldiers of Ireland gave up the ghost. But their principles were not then doomed to perish; they rose from the ashes of the Volunteers, and the course of reproduction was but a short transition from languor and hopelessness to activity and enthusiasm, and, with a perilous excess of energy in both, their principles became those of the United Irishmen in 1791. In noticing the error which led to the insecurity of the settlement of 1782, the object is not to depreciate the merits of a man, whose glory Ireland cannot afford to see disparaged. The highest political wisdom is not always combined with the most exalted genius; a patriot may be pure in his principles, gifted with the finest fancy, the most varied powers of wit and eloquence, yet he may not be a man on whose judgment alone a people would do well to rest the adjustment of a great national question at a momentous crisis. To no one patriot who ever existed,—not even to Washington himself, —would it be prudent for a nation, in political warfare, to confide alone a question on which its destinies depended.

In the field, weakness prevails in the multiplicity of counsel; but the strife of war and the struggles of party demand very different combinations of mental faculties: in the former, the acutest perception, the promptest determination, united with the coolest judgment, constitute the able general; in the other, the qualities that are essential to

* "Parliamentary Debates," Dublin, 1785.

great statesmen, are those which enable them warily and watchfully to approach the waves of public opinion, and to penetrate the depths of political cunning, to discern the distant dangers that beset advantages reluctantly conceded or fortunately obtained, and to look well to the intrenchments of the law which are thrown up around them. The single patriot, throughout the turmoil of a protracted session, is no match for an entire administration; and at a game of diplomacy, Grattan, it must be admitted, had but a poor chance of success with such skilful dealers and accomplished shufflers as his opponents.

The dissolution of the Volunteers was supposed to be atoned for by the appointment of a liberal lord lieutenant. Lord Fitzwilliam came over, but neither reform nor Catholic emancipation followed. In 1795 the Irish opposition began to retrieve some of its errors, and to regain a little of its former popularity; its hostility, however, to "the incipient creeping Union" had determined Mr. Pitt to direct its attention to other objects, and he accordingly amused the nation's hopes with a popular viceroy.

The coalition with the Duke of Portland made it necessary to concede to that nobleman the management of Irish affairs. His Grace knew Ireland, and was an enemy to her wrongs; he obtained Pitt's consent to the appointment of Lord Fitzwilliam, and, what was more difficult, he obtained that noble lord's. During these arrangements, the duke was in communication with the leading members of the Irish opposition; many of whom were his private friends. "Mr. Grattan, Mr. William Ponsonby, Mr. Denis Bowes Daly, and other members of that party, were therefore invited to London; they held frequent consultations with the Duke of Portland and Lord Fitzwilliam, at which Mr. Edmund Burke also occasionally assisted".*

"The terms of the Irish members were, support of ministers, approbation of the war, and assent to the strong measures of government,—in consideration of Catholic emancipation, the dismissal of the Beresford faction (and for all reform), the prevention of embezzlement, and improvement in the mode of collecting and administering the revenues of the country. Burke alone had the boldness to demand, not only emancipation, but the immediate promotion of Catholics, in some ascertained proportion, to places of trust in the state. This, however, was asked from the liberality of government, not demanded from its justice; and the preceding arrangements were communicated to the British government, as the terms on which they were willing to take a share in the Irish government".†

* "Pieces of Irish History", 79.

† "Pieces of Irish History", p. 79.

Office was not the object of the patriotism of a Grattan, but it became the consequence of it; and ministerial patriots in Ireland seldom have long preserved or deserved the people's confidence. The breath of administration is not the atmosphere for their sturdy principles. That ominous annunciation, in 1782, at the close of the battle for parliamentary independence, "I think that places are now honourable, and, in taking one, I should be the friend of the people and of his Majesty's government", was now acted on under an administration whose leader had become hostile to reform.

A man in the secrets of the opposition party of that time —the head-piece of that system which grew out of the insecurity of Irish independence and the failure of the measures which terminated in the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, a man whose word was never doubted by friend or foe—Thomas Addis Emmet—thus speaks of the proposals of the Irish leaders made to the Duke of Portland, and acquiesced in by Mr. Pitt: "Mr Pitt wished, and indeed tried, to obtain that some of these measures should be at least delayed in the execution for the season; but Mr. Grattan and his friends insisted that they should be brought forward in the very first session, in order to give eclat to their administration. In the propriety of this demand the Duke of Portland uniformly concurred; and even Mr. Pitt himself, who had previously kept in the background, and avoided personal communication with Lord Fitzwilliam's friends, was present at some of the later interviews, and certainly did not prevent its being believed that he acquiesced in those demands, with which it was impossible to doubt his being unacquainted. The members of opposition had no great experience of cabinets; they conceived that they were entering into honourable engagements, in which everything that was allowed to be understood, was equally binding with whatever was absolutely expressed. They rested satisfied that their stipulations were known and acceded to; they neglected to get them formally signed and ratified, or reduced to the shape of instructions from the British cabinet to the viceroy; they put them unsuspectingly in their pockets, and set off to become ministers in Ireland".

The power of Lord Fitzwilliam was first tried on the dismissal of the Beresford faction from the various offices which that grasping family had so long contrived to monopolize.

Pitt expostulated with the viceroy on the dismissal of the Beresfords, notwithstanding the institution of a parliamentary inquiry at this period, respecting a public fraud, in which a subordinate clerk of the revenue was put forward as a sort of vicarious victim for the great national jobbers, and in this single instance the public had been defrauded of

£60,000. "Circumstances", on the same authority, "raised a suspicion that the transaction was the result of fraud and collusion, accomplished through the influence of one of this faction, who was generally believed to be a partner in the profits".* The family of the person referred to overran every department in the state; but in the revenue, they monopolized the Custom House itself. That splendid palace for the collection of customs in a city without trade, remains a lasting monument of the venality of parliament, and of the power of a faction, which a British minister dared not to oppose, and a representative of royalty was not permitted to offend. "To aggrandise this faction, a commissioner of excise was protected by parliament with all the jealous care of royalty itself; nay, so sacred was the person of the meanest officer under this family department, that a bill was introduced into the house by Mr. Secretary Orde, 12th August, 1785, which declared it felony to strike an exciseman; but, even before that bill, the Chief Baron Burgh had asked the house "were they prepared to give to the dipping-rule what they should refuse to the sceptre ?"

Such was the power of a faction which Mr. Pitt thought fit to uphold in Ireland. It is impossible to give any explanation of his conduct creditable to his character as a statesman. The faction was not essential to his policy with regard to the Union, for the best of reasons—some of its leaders were hostile to it; they knew their reign must terminate with the existence of an Irish parliament.

The following extracts from the two celebrated letters of Lord Fitzwilliam to the Earl of Carlisle, published in 1795, set the conduct of Mr. Pitt on this question in the plainest light:—"I made proposals", he says, "to the British minister for the removal of the attorney and solicitor-generals (Messrs. Wolfe and Toler); Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Portland knew perfectly well that the men whom I found possessed of these ministerial offices, were not the men in whom I meant to confide in the arduous measures I had to undertake. Was I, then, to have two sets of men—one possessing confidence without office; the other, office without confidence ?

"And now for the grand question about Mr. Beresford:—In a letter of mine to Mr. Pitt on this subject, I reminded him of a conversation in which I had expressed to him (in answer to the question put to him by me) my apprehension that it would be necessary to remove that gentleman, and that he did not offer the slightest objection, or say a single word in favour of Mr. Beresford. This alone would have made me suppose that I should be exempt from every imputation of breach of agreement, if I determined to remove

* "Pieces of Irish History", 107.

him; but when, on my arrival here, I found all those apprehensions of his dangerous power, which Mr. Pitt admits I had often represented to him, were fully justified, when he was filling a situation greater than that of Lord Lieutenant, and when I clearly saw that if I had connected myself with him, it would have been connecting myself with a person under universal heavy suspicions, and subjecting my government to all the opprobrium and unpopularity attendant upon his mal administration, I determined, while I meant to curtail him of his power, and to show to the nation that he did not belong to my administration, to let him remain, in point of income, as well to the full as he had ever been. I did not touch, and he knew I had determined not to touch, a hair of the head of any of his family or friends, and they are still left in the enjoyment of more emolument than was ever accumulated in any country upon any one family.

"You will recollect that the measure of emancipation to the Catholics was originally the measure of Mr. Pitt and the Westmoreland administration. The (previous) declarations, both of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, on this subject, are well known in this country and often quoted: 'they would not risk a rebellion in Ireland on such a question'. But what they would not risk under Lord Westmoreland's administration, they are not afraid to risk under mine.

"But after all, why did not Mr. Pitt warn me of those horrid consequences (of emancipation) previous to my departure for Ireland, if he really felt them? Why was the subject left open for my judgment and discretion? I trust that the evil genius of England will not so far infatuate its ministers, as to induce them to wait for more decisive corroboration of the faithfulness and honesty with which I have warned them of the danger of persisting in their fatal change of opinion on this momentous question.

"The measure of arranging the treasury bench, the bare outline, or rather the principle, of which has been stated in the House preparatory to its introduction, was fully agreed on between Sir John Parnell and Mr. Pitt.

"Are those the measures on which I am to be accused, when the House of Commons of Ireland had unanimously granted me the largest supplies that have ever been demanded, when I laid a foundation for increasing the established force of the country, and procured a vote of £200,000 towards the general defence of the empire?

"The Catholic question entered for nothing into the cause of my recall. From the very beginning, as well as in the whole proceedings of that fatal business, for such I fear I must call it, I acted in perfect conformity with the original outline settled between me and his Majesty's ministers previous to my departure from London. From a full consideration of the real merits of the case, as well as from

every information I had been able to collect of the state and temper of Ireland, from the year 1793, I was decidedly of opinion that not only sound policy, but justice, required on the part of Great Britian, that the work which was left imperfect at that period ought to be completed, and the Catholics relieved from every remaining disqualification. In this opinion, the Duke of Portland uniformly concurred with me, and when the question came under discussion, previous to my departure from Ireland, I found the cabinet, with Mr Pitt at their head, strongly impressed with the same opinion. Had I found it otherwise, I never would have undertaken the government.

"As early as the 8th January last, I wrote to the Secretary of State on this subject; I told him that I trembled about the Catholics.

"On the 9th February, that gentleman (Mr. Pitt) wrote to me to expostulate on the dismissal of Mr. Beresford, and on the negociations with Mr. Wolfe and Mr. Toler. By the same mail, and in a letter dated the 8th instant, the very day before Mr. Pitt had written to me, came a letter from the Secretary of State, touching at length on the important subject (Catholic emancipation), and bringing it for the first time into play as a question of any doubt or difficulty with the British cabinet.

"Then for the first time, it appears to have been discovered that the deferring it (the question of emancipation) would not be merely an act of expediency, or 'a thing to be desired for the present', but 'the means of doing a greater service to the British Empire than it has been capable of receiving since the Revolution, or at least since the Union' (with Scotland).

"In my answer to Mr. Pitt, a copy of which I send you, and which I wrote the very night I received his letter, I entered fully into the subject of my dismissals; I stated, as you will see, my reasons for having determined on them, as well as for adhering to them when once resolved on. I then put it to himself to determine for me and the efficacy of my government; I left him to make choice between Mr. Beresford and me.

"The same night I wrote to the Duke of Portland. I testified my surprise, after such an interval of time, and after the various details which I had transmitted to him, advising him of the hourly increasing necessity of bringing forward the Catholic question, and the impolicy and danger of even hesitating about it, I should now be pressed for the first time to defer the question till some future occasion. I refused to be the person to run the risk of such a determination. I refused to be the person to raise a flame in the country that nothing short of arms would be able to keep down.

"Had Mr. Beresford never been dismissed, we should never have heard of them (Mr. Pitt's objections to emancipation at that time), and I should have remained. But it will be said, in proving this point so strongly, I still leave myself open to other accusations which affect my character, when I avow the earnestness with which I had determined to pull down the Beresfords. Charged with the government of a distracted and discontented country, am I alone to be fettered and restrained in the choice of the persons by whom I am to be assisted ?—and rather than indulge me in that single point,—even considering it in the light of indulgence, —must the people of England boldly face, I had almost said, the certainty of driving this kingdom into a rebellion, and open another breach for ruin and destruction to break in upon us ?"*

Volumes have been written on the events that grew out of the recall of Lord Fitzwilliam, but here is the germ of them all. Few of those who are now aware of the existence of these letters, have leisure to consult them; and those who are desirous to know the true cause of the rebellion of 1798, will not find fault with the length of these quotations. These facts are to be gathered from them:—that the Union had been determined on at this period; that the peace of Ireland was to be sacrificed for its attainment, and that attainment promoted by the loss of influence on the part of the Irish opposition, and the confirmed power of the Beresford oligarchy, in order to exasperate the country—in one word, to goad the people into a rebellion.

Whether that attainment of a union was cheaply effected, or whether the beneficial effects expected from it have compensated for the terrible consequences of a civil war, the progress of events will tell, and not opinions founded on theories, or formed to support them.

But all the experience the world can afford, of subsequent advantages arising from civil commotion, will hardly justify subscription to the doctrine, that political foresight can ever so far determine the aspect of future circumstances, dependent as they are on the mutability of all human governance, and influenced by every tide in the affairs of empire, as to render distant good and probable advantages, benefits to be sought after or secured by a wise statesman, at the cost of present evil, and a certain prospect of civil war.

Out of evil, good may no doubt come. The good effects of the legislative union may yet predominate over the evils that attended its attainment. The calamities of that period may be only remembered as curious historical facts; but the author of those evils, Mr. William Pitt, can find no

* "Letters of a Venerated Nobleman, recently retired from this country, to the Earl of Carlisle, explaining the cause of that event". Dublin, 1795.

justification in those results. In putting a people to the sword, every drop of blood that was shed in that rebellion must be laid to his account. And in Ireland, at all events, his barbarous policy can be remembered only to be abhorred.*

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CHAPTER VI.

"The Borough Parliament"—Its Factions and its Foes, its Intolerance and Corruption, deprived it of all popular support.

The preceding pages were intended to show the vast influence over the mind of the nation and its rulers, which the Volunteer association at one period exerted; the failure of the only measure effected by it, namely, the independence of the Irish parliament, and the necessity for reform, more than ever felt at the time of its suppression. The society of the United Irishmen was formed with a view of accomplishing those objects which it had failed to carry into effect. The written and spoken sentiments of the leaders of the opposition of that period, and the proceedings of the various popular clubs from 1778 to 1795, had a powerful influence on the public mind. To this influence, fanned by the breath of Pitt, and kindled into flame by the eloquence of the reformers of that day, the leaders of the United Irishmen owed the early impressions they received of the rotten state of the representation, and the hopelessness of every attempt in parliament for its restoration.

* On the motion for public honours to the remains of William Pitt, on the grounds of his excellence as a statesman, Mr. Wyndham said: "With the fullest acknowledgment, both of the virtues and the talents of the eminent man in question, I do not think, from whatever cause it has proceeded, that his life has been beneficial to his country". Fox, on the same question said: "I cannot consent to confer public honours, on the ground of his being an excellent statesman, on the man who, in my opinion, was the sole, certainly the chief, supporter of a system, which I had been early taught to consider as a bad one". In 1785, Doctor Jebb declared that, politically speaking, Pitt was the worst man living, and would go greater lengths to destroy liberty than any minister ever did before him.

There is some exaggeration in this assertion. There were two men then living, the sphere of whose action was beyond the range of Jebb's observation; and there were no lengths they would not have gone, not only to destroy liberty, but to bring its advocates, and their political opponents, to destruction; these men were Lords Castlereagh and Clare.

Independently of the example of France, which, at revolutionary periods, has always exerted a great influence over the popular mind in Great Britain, the question of reform began deeply to engage public attention in that country; and the hostility of Mr. Pitt, who now hated that question and its advocates with all the rancour of an apostate, tended to exasperate the public, and call forth the various clubs, which gave vent to the public discontent. In Ireland the importance of the question of reform was enhanced by the great dangers apprehended for the national independence, and the slow and stealthy, but steady, progress of "the creeping and incipient Union", in every measure of the British minister in reference to Ireland.

The question that especially disclosed the views of the British minister with respect to the final nature of the settlement of the subject of Irish independence, was that which goes under the name of the Irish propositions, and which, only three years after the period of the supposed settlement of that question, left no doubt on the minds of the people of Ireland, that the British government meant not to maintain the compact into which they had entered.

The eleven propositions were introduced into the Irish parliament by Mr. Orde, on the 7th February, 1785, and on the 22nd February, by Mr. Pitt in England. He concluded his speech with bringing forward a general resolution, declaring "that it was highly important to the general interests of the empire, that the commercial intercourse between Great Britain and Ireland should be finally adjusted and engaging that Ireland should be admitted to a permanent and irrevocable participation of the commercial advantages of this country, when her parliament should permanently and irrevocably secure an aid out of the surplus of the hereditary revenue of that kingdom towards defraying the expense of protecting the empire in time of peace".

In a subsequent debate, Mr. Pitt declared "that among all the objects of his political life, this was, in his opinion, the most important in which he had ever engaged, nor did he imagine he should ever meet another that could call forth all his public feelings, and rouse every exertion of his heart, in so forcible a manner as the present had done. In the progress of this measure the house was astonished with an addition of sixteen new propositions to the original eleven: they were pretended by Mr. Pitt to be explanatory, but were wholly distinct, irrelevant, and contradictory to the first. It was evident to the whole of the house, that the measure was an insidious plan to regain the dependence of the Irish parliament. Mr. Sheridan said, that "Ireland, newly escaped from harsh trammels and severe discipline, was treated like a high-mettled horse, hard to catch; and the Irish secretary was sent back to the field to soothe and coax him, with a

sieve of provender in one hand, and a bridle in the other". Fox was so astonished at the conduct of Mr. Pitt on this occasion, that he declared "in the personal and political character of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, there were many qualities and habits which had often surprised him, and which he believed confounded the speculation of every man who had much considered or analysed his disposition. But his conduct on that night had reduced all that was unaccountable, incoherent, and contradictory in his character in times past, to a mere nothing. He shone out in a new light, surpassing even himself, and leaving his hearers wrapt in amazement, uncertain whether most to wonder at the extraordinary speech they had heard, or the frontless confidence with which that speech had been delivered".

He accused him, from the first moment the system had been proposed, of one continued course of "tricks, subterfuges, and tergiversations, uniform alone in contradiction and inconsistencies". "That he had played a double game with England, and a double game with Ireland, and sought to juggle both nations, by a train of unparalleled subtlety". He concluded by saying, "He would not barter English commerce for Irish slavery".

The propositions were sent up to the House of Lords; here it was curious to see the question treated, not as a question of commerce, but as a proposal for a future union. The Lords saw through the insidious project, and it was openly canvassed. Lord Lansdowne treated "the idea of an union as a thing that was impracticable. High-minded and jealous as were the people of Ireland, we must first learn whether they will consent to give up their distinct empire, their parliament, and all the honours which belonged to them". In the Irish parliament, the measures were no less freely canvassed, and the debate terminated in the rejection of the propositions,—an offence which Pitt never forgot or forgave to Ireland.

The conduct of the Irish parliament in reference to the regency question tended a good deal to precipitate events, and to render the course on which the English minister had already determined, one to be pursued more speedily and recklessly than it might otherwise have been attempted. On this subject two motions were made in the Irish Commons; one by Grattan, the other by Mr. Conolly. By the first, the royal incapacity was declared; and by the second, it was proposed to present an address to the Prince of Wales, requesting him to take upon himself the government, with its various powers, jurisdictions, and prerogatives. This motion was opposed by Mr. Fitzgibbon: he said, "The fact was, that the government of Ireland, under its present constitution, could never go on, unless they followed Great Britain implicitly in all regulations of imperial policy". "And he

would predict, that such unadvised rashness must ultimately lead to a legislative union with England, a measure which he deprecated, but which was more surely prepared by such violence than if all the sluices of corruption were opened together, and poured in one overwhelming torrent upon the country's representatives". Both motions, however, were carried in the Commons, and likewise in the House of Lords. Buckingham refused to transmit their address. Lord Clare must have forgotten his deprecation of the Union, when, five years subsequently, he declared in his speech in favour of the Union, that for the last six or seven years, he had been pressing this measure on the attention of the British minister.

There can be no question that Pitt's defeat in Ireland, on the great question of the commercial propositions, and the opposition to his views on the regency question, had exasperated the British minister against Ireland: in the words of the editor of the "Annual Register" for 1790, "the defeat of his commercial propositions, in the year 1785, had left an impression of resentment against the nation upon the mind of the minister". In 1787, De Lolme, the author of the work on the Constitution of England, published an essay, containing a few strictures on the union of Scotland with England, and on the situation of Ireland. The object of the work is to recommend an incorporating union between Great Britain and Ireland.

In the same year, a Mr. Williams published a pamphlet, entitled, "An Union of England and Ireland proved to be practicable, and equally beneficial to both kingdoms".

The question of the Union was cautiously mooted in 1793, as will be seen by the debate on the bill for "prevention of traitorous correspondence with the enemy". Mr. Fox said that this bill necessarily included the people of Ireland, who were certainly the subjects of the king; and consequently, it went to legislate for Ireland, by making that treason in an Irishman, by an English act of Parliament, which was not treason by an Irish act. Mr. Pitt said: "He felt this subject to be delicate, but he thought he might venture to go so far as to say, that if England made an act treason in all his Majesty's subjects, which act was not such by any law of Ireland, if such act was done in Ireland by an Irishman who should afterwards come into England, he might be tried and executed for it"; and vice versa with an Englishman in Ireland.

Mr. Fox called this the most extravagant doctrine he had ever heard.

Several members spoke upon the case when applied to Ireland, and lamented that so delicate a subject should have been discussed.

AN IRISH VOLUNTEER.
(From an old Print).

The "Annual Register," in 1790, plainly stated the views entertained in England of the independence of the Irish parliament. "To whatever independence", says the editor, "Ireland may advance her claim, she is, in reality, nothing more than the province and servant of England. She is not the ally of the British government, but, on the contrary, acknowledges our king for her sovereign; that if we take into account the nature of the English constitution, acknowledges her dignities, her trusts, and her revenues to be in the gift of an administration that depends on the parliament of Great Britain: she may, in a few cases, or in some emphatical and singular instance, assert her prerogative, and pursue her own interests in preference to ours; but the daily routine of her affairs, and the ordinary course of her administration, will be modelled in conformity to the interests, the prejudices, and the jealousies of the country that is the seat of empire. She will not afford a theatre that will appear wide enough for the ardour of patriotism or the excursiveness of ambition"—"An. Register," 1790, p. 33.

In England the democratic clubs began to be formed in 1780, and the greater number of them were suffered to subside without any prosecution. They again revived in 1794, and it was determined to put down democracy and the advocacy of parliamentary reform, by bringing the reformers to trial as traitors. In 1792, Pitt pledged himself that a traitorous "conspiracy did actually exist"; and a most insidious attempt to involve the opposition members in it was made, but quashed by the spirited conduct of some of them on that occasion.

In 1794, Pitt took up his pledge of the conspiracy of 1792. One of the reports on those societies states that the number of conspirators amounted to 20,000 persons. The arms found for them consisted of eighteen muskets, ten battle-axes, and twenty rough blades, and the general fund for the insurrection amounted to £9 sterling. Mr. Pitt, on bringing the conduct of these clubs before parliament, depicted this horrible conspiracy in the most alarming colours—"that arms had not only been actually procured, but distributed by these societies", as the report states; and "that a conspiracy so formidable had never yet existed". The twelve honest men on their oaths, at the trials of these conspirators a short time subsequently, virtually decided that no such conspiracy existed. In the beginning of 1793, the ministerial prints, and even ministers themselves, made allusions on various occasions to plots and conspiracies, "the obvious intent of which was, indirectly to implicate the Whig members in the obnoxious charge" (see "Annual Register," 1793). Under the auspices of government, a society had been formed, generally known under the name of Mr.

Reeve's Association, to procure information against seditious societies, and secret intelligence which might serve to bring persons of suspected loyalty before the proper tribunal. In Plowden's "History of the Last Twenty Months" (p. 225), he remarks: "The spirit of espionage and information first engendered by the proclamation, and since openly fostered by Mr. Reeve's Association, and certainly not discountenanced by government, had now grown into such strength as to produce consequences of the most alarming nature. The agitated minds of the public were daily more and more inflamed by the most terrifying accounts of domestic insurrections and deep-laid plans to destroy the constitution. The dwindled phalanx of opposition was so openly, so grossly, and so confidently abused and calumniated, that to many their very names were synonymous with the term of traitor and enemy, even in the very Houses of Parliament: prejudices, alarms, and fears had operated upon many; a conviction that to disapprove of the war against France was treason to England; that to inquire into the grounds of public measures had almost ceased to be the duty of a senator; and to divide with opposition was little short of rallying under the standard of rebellion".

If the people pushed their efforts for reform to the length of resistance to authority, they were told by the Duke of Norfolk, in 1776, that "the doctrine of resistance was a principle of the constitution". Lord Lauderdale said, "that times and circumstances might be such as to make resistance become a duty". Lord Erskine, on the same occasion, in his place in parliament, declared, "he would say again, and again, it was the right of the people to resist that government which exercised tyranny". Mr. Pitt, in 1782, asserted that "we lost America by the corruption of an unreformed parliament, and we should never have a wise and honourable administration, be freed from the evils of unnecessary wars, nor the fatal effects of the funding system, till a radical reform was obtained". The Duke of Richmond's plan of reform embraced universal suffrage and annual parliaments: this plan he proposed to Colonel Sharman, at the head of an army in military array, namely, the Volunteers of Ireland. His Grace distinctly declared, "that he had no hopes of reform from the House of Commons—that reform must come from the people themselves". Burke said, "that no remedy for the distemper of parliament could be expected to be begun in parliament"; that "the value, spirit, and essence of the House of Commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation"; and elsewhere—"by this want of sympathy with the people, they would cease to be a House of Commons". Mr. Pitt again, in 1785, in one of his last speeches in favour of reform, declared that, "without a parliamentary reform, the

liberty of the nation could not be preserved". Fitzgibbon (afterwards Lord Clare), in 1782, said, in his place in parliament, that "as the nation was then committed to obtain a restoration of their rights, it behoved every man to stand firm". It would be tedious to adduce further instances of the mode in which the people's passions were inflamed, their hopes in the efficacy of legitimate means for the reformation of abuses dispelled, and their apprehensions of resistance removed, by constantly pointing it out as the only remedy for the evils of the nation.

"William Pitt of 1782", said Mr. Grey, "the reformer of that day, was William Pitt the prosecutor and persecutor of reformers in 1794. He, who thought fit to inflame the passions of the people, and to instigate them to contempt for the House of Commons at that time, now would not suffer the people to judge of their own dearest rights and interests, and persecuted, with the real bitterness of an apostate, his own partner in the question of parliamentary reform".

The 7th of May, 1782, Pitt made his first motion in furtherance of reform, for a committee of inquiry, which was lost by twenty votes. He renewed the motion in 1783, and it was lost by forty-four votes. In 1785 he brought forward a specific plan of reform for adoption, and it was lost by thirty-four votes. A part of his first plan was, the application of a million of money to the purchase of the rotten boroughs. In 1794 he had thrown off the domino of a reformer; he declared on oath, at the trial of John Horne Tooke, that he recollected no particulars of the proceedings at a meeting of the reformers of signal interest, which he attended the 16th May 1782. He could not tell if Tooke was present; he could not say if delegates from cities and counties attended, but he believed not; but, on cross-examination, he admitted some of them might be deputies. One of the charges, be it remembered, against Tooke, was that of attending meetings where the members were delegated by other bodies. Major Cartwright, in his "Constitutional Defence of England," speaking of Pitt's speech on the 7th of May, 1782, says: "These very words were made the subject of a well-known resolution of the leading friends to a reform, assembled at the Thatched House very soon after the speech was delivered; the original draft of that resolution, in 1791 or 1792, was in the possession of the author of this book, and shown by him to the gentlemen present at a meeting of 'the Friends of the People', with corrections in Mr. Pitt's own handwriting".

At the meeting of reformers on the 16th of May, 1782, a copy of the resolutions was ordered to be printed and circulated by the society. It is in the following terms :—

"Thatched House Tavern, 16th May, 1782.

"At a numerous and respectable meeting of the members of parliament, friendly to a constitutional reformation, and the members of several committees of counties and cities:

"Present,—The Duke of Richmond, Lord Surrey, Lord Mahon, the Lord Mayor, Sir Watkin Lewes, Mr. Duncombe, Sir C. Wray, Mr. B. Holles, Mr. Withers, the Hon. William Pitt, Rev. Mr. Wyvill, Major Cartwright, Mr. John Horne Tooke, Alderman Wilkes, Doctor Jebb, Mr. Churchill, Mr. Frost, etc., etc., etc.

"Resolved unanimously,—That the motion of the Hon. William Pitt, for the appointment of a committee of the House of Commons, to inquire into the state of the representation of the people of Great Britain, and to report the same to the House, and also what steps it might be necessary to take, having been deferred by a motion for the order of the day, it has become indispensably necessary that application should be made to parliament, by petitions from the collective body of the people, in all their respective districts, requesting a substantial reformation of the Commons' House of Parliament.

"Resolved unanimously,—That the meeting, considering that a general application to the collective body of the House of Commons cannot be made before the close of the present session, is of opinion that the sense of the people should be taken at such times as may be convenient during the summer, in order to lay their several petitions before parliament early in the next session, when these proposals for a parliamentary reformation (without which neither the liberty of the nation can be preserved, nor the permanence of any virtuous administration be secure) may receive that ample and mature discussion which so momentous a question demands".

Now the document, corrected by Pitt himself, collated with the evidence given by him at the trial of John Horne Tooke, on the matters referred to in it, shows the most extraordinary forgetfulness of important facts it is possible to conceive. On his examination by Tooke, he stated he was present at the meeting, in May, 1782, at the Thatched House Tavern. "He could no recollect with certainty, but rather thought the prisoner was present. That it was recommended to obtain the sense of the people on the question of parliamentary reform".

Quest.—"Was it recommended to obtain that sense by parishes and districts ?"

Ans.—"I have no particular recollection as to that point. I remember that it was agreed by the meeting to recommend to the people during the summer to petition parliament".

Quest. by the Attorney-General—"Was it, or was it not, a convention of delegates from different bodies ?"

Ans.—"I do not, at this distance of time, remember how it was composed. I did not conceive that the members were authorized to act for any particular body, but that each was acting for himself, and in his own individual capacity".

On cross-examination by Mr. Erskine. Ans.—"I always understood that the members who composed that meeting were acting for themselves; I don't know, however, but that some of them might be deputed. I must again repeat that, at this distance of time, I cannot exactly ascertain how the meeting was composed".

Mr. Pitt's memory seldom failed him as it did on this occasion, when he could not remember how that meeting was constituted, described in the very resolution corrected by himself, as "consisting of members of parliament, and of members of several committees of counties and cities", and could not recollect John Horne Tooke having been present at that meeting, and having taken a part in its proceedings.

Mr. Pitt, in 1794, May 11th, brought forward his motion for leave to bring in a bill "to empower his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as his Majesty shall suspect are conspiring against his person and government",—chiefly levelled against the London Corresponding Society and the Constitutional Society.

Fox, in opposition to this bill, said: "If he were asked without doors what was to be done, he would say, this was not now a question of morality or of duty, but of prudence. Acquiesce in the bill only as long as you are compelled to do so. It was a bill to destroy the constitution, and part of the system of an administration aiming at that end. No attempt of the Stuarts called for more opposition than the present bill, and extraordinary times demanded extraordinary declarations"—"Annual Register," 1806.

The number of political clubs which sprung up at the end of Mr. Pitt's abandonment of the cause of reform, was considerable. The origin and object of some of the most important of these are deserving of notice.

The objects of these societies were similar to those of the "Society for Constitutional Information", whose origin was of an earlier date, and is attributed to a proposal of Major Cartwright, in 1778, to establish a "Society of Political Inquiry". This object was not accomplished; but its proposal laid the foundation of the "Society of Constitutional Information", which was formed in 1780.* Dr. Jebb, Major Cartwright, and Capel Lofft, were the founders of it. Among its distinguished members we find the Earl of Derby, the late Duke of Norfolk, then Lord Surrey, the Duke of

* Vide "Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright", vol. i., p. 120.

Richmond, Duke of Roxburgh, Earl of Selkirk, Lord Dacre, Lord Sempill, Lord Kinnaird, Sir John Sinclair, R. B. Sheridan, the Earl of Effingham, Dr. Price, Dr. Towers, Granville Sharp, etc. † Its well-known " Declaration of Rights" was drawn up by Major Cartwright. Sir William Jones said this document "ought to be written in letters of gold".

This society thanked Tom Paine for his first and second parts of the " Rights of Man; they sent addresses of congratulation on the French revolution to the Jacobin Club and the Convention of France. In these they assert, that "revolutions will now become easy". Horne Tooke, as a member of the committee, addressed a letter to Petion,*then Mayor of Paris, stating that 4,000 livres were sent with it, to assist the French in defraying the expenses of the war against all tyrants who might oppose the liberty of the French, without excepting any of them, even if it should be his own country.

On Tooke's trial, Major Cartwright deposed he had the honour to be called the father of " the Society for Constitutional Information"; that the original declaration of the Society for Constitutional Information was signed by Mr. Pitt, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, etc. The Chief Justice asked Mr. Tooke if his signature was to the declaration; to which Mr. Tooke answered, " God forbid ! my lord, that I should ever have signed anything so criminal ".

The society called the " Friends of the People", was established in 1792. The principal members were Charles Grey, the Earl of Lauderdale, Philip Francis, James Macintosh, Lord Kinnaird, the Hon. Thomas Erskine, G. Tierney, Esq., R. B. Sheridan, W. H. Lambton, John Cartwright, S. Whitbread, jun., Lord J. Russell, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, etc., etc. At the first meeting, W. H. Lambton in the chair, 26th April, 1792, it was resolved unanimously—

" That a motion be made in the House of Commons, at an earlier period in the next session of parliament, introducing a parliamentary reform.

† Ibid., vol. i., p. 135.

* Jerome Petion de Villeneuve, a native of Chantes, was one of the Deputies to the Tiers Etat in 1789. A prominent member of the Jacobin Club, he was an ally of Robespierre and aided him in his many schemes. When the Royal Family fled to Varennes he was one of those appointed to escort them back to Paris. He was elected Mayor of Paris and was the first President of the Convention. When the Terrorists became masters of the situation he joined the Girondist Party and was proscribed on June 2nd, 1793. He escaped to Caen and from thence to the Gironde, where his dead body was found in a cornfield partly devoured by wolves. Ed.

"Resolved unanimously—That Charles Grey, Esq., be requested to make, and the Hon. Thomas Erskine to second, the above motion.

"Signed, W. H. Lambton, Chairman".

The next meeting was held May 12, 1792, and the chairman of it was the Right Hon. Lord John Russell.

In 1795, this society suspended all proceedings on the subject of parliamentary reform by public advertisement. Its grand object, however, was not lost sight of by Charles Grey. For forty years his life was devoted to its accomplishment; and the forty years' war with corruption he lived to bring to a successful issue.

The Revolution Society of London, in commemoration of the Revolution of 1688, sprung up in 1789, Dr. Price and Earl Stanhope being its leading members. They conducted a correspondence with the National Assembly of France. Towers and Cooper were the president and secretary. Cooper was a man of great abilities, bold, upright, and energetic; he fled to America, to avoid the fate of Muir and Palmer; he rose to distinction there, and died universally honoured and beloved, in the seventieth year of his age, the 22nd of October, 1829. Cooper and Watt were likewise members of the Manchester Constitutional Society,and in its name having presented an address in France to the Jacobin Society, were attacked for so doing by Burke, in the House of Commons; and Cooper defended himself and his brother delegate in one of the best written pamphlets of that time, "A reply to Mr. Burke's invective". Watt was subsequently executed in Scotland on a charge of treason.

The other societies of this period, of minor importance, were, the "Friends of Universal Peace and the Rights of Man", originally established at Stockport. Of the "Westminster Committee of Reform", the first meeting took place in 1780: its resolutions in favour of annual parliaments were signed by Fox. The society called the "Friends of the Liberty of the Press" was established in 1792: the declaration of this society was drawn up by Erskine. In this admirable paper the system of espionage, which had been recently adopted by Pitt, was denounced.

The language and writings of the members of these different clubs were sufficiently strong to be taken, or mistaken, by many for sedition.

The "Society of United Englishmen", according to the account given of its ramifications in the "secret report" of 23rd January, 1799, had forty divisions formed in London, extended to Wales, Lancashire, and communicated with Ireland; had made great progress in Manchester, till checked by the arrest of its members in 1798; had eighty divisions there, and each consisted of not less than fifteen members.

In the report, it is stated to have been very active in its attempts to seduce the soldiery, and that it had tests, signs, and symbolic devices. The whole of the divisions were governed by a committee, styled the National Committee of England, whose members were unknown to the rest of the society, and was said to have corresponded with the executive of the United Irishmen.

"The London Corresponding Society" originated about 1792, its grand object, parliamentary reform, on the Duke of Richmond's plan. Chief Justice Eyre, in his charge on the trial of Tooke, said, "It is so composed, as by dividing and subdividing, each division, as soon as it amounted to a certain number, sending off a new division so as to spread over the country, every other society, no matter how remote, it incorporates or affiliates, till it embraces an extent incalculable. It is undoubtedly a political monster", etc.

John Edwards, on Hardy's trial, deposed that this society was reading the address of Mr. Pitt and the Duke of Richmond, when it was assailed by the police.

"A National Convention" was first suggested in a letter from Stockport, 7th December, 1792.

The Convention in Scotland was set on foot in 1793. Watt's plan for seizing the castle of Edinburgh was formed at this period. He had previously been employed as a secret informer by government, and dismissed; had subsequently joined Cooper in Paris, and presented an address to the Jacobins from the Manchester society. In laying traps for treason in the Scotch conspiracy, he got entangled in his own snares, and was executed.

Mr. Muir, one of the faculty of advocates of Edinburgh, and the Rev. Fyshe Palmer, a dissenting clergyman of Dundee, a member of the University of Cambridge, were the two first reformers brought before the tribunal of justice on charges of sedition, trumped up on evidence of taking a part in the public proceedings of the associations at that time formed for the purpose of obtaining a reform. Both these gentlemen, men eminent for their talents, highly respected in their several professions, and amiable in private life, were convicted and sentenced to transportation, sent to the hulks chained, and worked in chains, previous to their departure for Botany Bay, with the common gang of convicts.

The formation of trades' unions appears to have been pointed out in 1782, by Sir William Jones: in writing to Major Cartwright, in a postscript, he states: "It is my deliberate, though private, opinion, that the people of England will never be a people, in the majestic sense of the word, unless 200,000 of the civil state be ready before the 1st of November to take the field without rashness or disorder, at

twenty-four hours' notice".* This is a pretty plain manifestation of the power ascribed to the demonstration of physical force, in contradistinction to the employment of it, for I am persuaded the latter was never contemplated by Sir William Jones. Fox said, "All the proceedings of these societies went on the Duke of Richmond's plan of reform".

But is impossible not to perceive in the acts and words of these bodies the spirit of republicanism pervading their proceedings, whether infused by spies and informers, or fanatics and "exaltados" of their own party, it is hard to say: in all probability, by both.

The Manchester Constitutional Society was addressed by the members of the Jacobin Club in Paris, as "Generous Republicans".

One of the leading members of the Corresponding Society was J. Frost. In 1793 he was convicted of uttering seditious expressions, "I am for equality, and no king", etc. Another member, Mr. John Cook, for the words, "D—n the monarchy, I want none", etc.

The sentiments of reformers of the upper classes of society, a few years later, were couched in language better adapted for "ears polite", but certainly not less indicative of the strong spirit of democracy. The Duke of Norfolk, in 1798, presiding at a dinner at the "Crown and Anchor", gave for a toast, "The sovereign majesty of the people", and for this act he was dismissed from the office of lord-lieutenant of the west riding of Yorkshire. Fox followed it up at the Whig Club, shortly after, by another sentiment of a similar character, "I will give you", said he, "a toast, than which I think there cannot be a better, according to the principles of this club—I mean, 'the Sovereignty of the People of Great Britain' ", and for this act he was dismissed from the Privy Council.

In Ireland, Lord Castlereagh imitated the example of Mr. Pitt. He entered on political life in the domino of a reformer, and aped the character, if not with all the tact, at least, with all the effrontery of his master. Of his early ardour for reform we have an account in Sampson's Memoirs: at page 43, he informs us, "Robert Stewart (afterwards Lord Castlereagh), at the general election in 1790, set himself up for representative of the County of Down, against what was called the lordly interest; and in order to ingratiate himself with the popular party, took the following oath or test upon the hustings, as a solemn compact between him and his constituents, namely: 'That he would, in and out of the House, with all his ability and influence, promote the success of a bill for amending the representation of the people; a bill for preventing pensioners

* See "Life and Correspondence of Major Cartwright", p. 150.

from sitting in parliament, or such placemen as cannot sit in the British House of Commons; a bill for limiting the number of placemen and pensioners, and the amount of pension; a bill for preventing revenue officers from voting at elections; a bill for rendering the servants of the crown in Ireland responsible for the expenditure of the public money; a bill to protect the personal safety of the subject against arbitrary and excessive bail, and against the power of attachment beyond the limits of the constitution' ".

In Ireland, at the same period, the formation of political clubs and societies kept pace with those in England. The Northern Whig Club, at a meeting held in Belfast, the 16th of April, 1790, Gowan Hamilton in the chair, passed a series of resolutions, the first of which was to the following effect: "Resolved unanimously, that when an unmasked and shameless system of ministerial corruption manifests an intention to sap the spirit, virtue, and independence of parliament, it is time for the people to look to themselves".

Among the original members of this society were Lords Charlemont, De Clifford, Moira, O'Neill, the Hon. Robert Stewart, Archibald H. Rowan, William Todd Jones, Colonel Sharman, Hon. E. Ward, Hon. H. Rowley, etc., etc. The toasts of the honourable members at their festive meetings comprised, "Our Sovereign Lord the People", etc.—Vide Teeling's Narrative.

"The Whig Club" was established in 1790, in Ireland, in imitation of that in England. "The frequent theme'" says Plowden, "of panegyric to Mr. Grattan, and of invective to Mr. Fitzgibbon, the heads of most of the great families were members of it, and it contributed not lightly to give popularity to the leading objects of their institution, which it was the universal object of Mr. Pitt's system to counteract".—Vide Plowden, vol. i., page 293.

Against Fitzgibbon's abuse of this club, Theobald Wolfe Tone was the first to publish a defence, which recommended him strongly to the Whigs; but they found him too warm an advocate, and he appears to have found them too little to his mind for their acquaintance to be of long duration.

The most memorable act of this club was its petition to the King, adopted at a meeting of the society, 5th April, 1798, Mr. Grattan in the chair, in order to lay before his majesty the state of the country, and "a vindication of his people against the traduction of his ministers". The Catholic question was not permitted to be discussed in the club.—Plowden, vol. i., page 324.

It may be here permitted me to state that Grattan entered parliament, and set out in public life, an opponent of the Catholic claims. He told the late Dr. Hussey, his most intimate friend, that he owed his change of opinion to the accidental perusal of Curry's "Civil Wars".

The club called the "Friends of the Constitution, Liberty, and Peace", is described by Pollock in 1793 as a moderate club, and its members as "most respectable and independent gentlemen".

The "Friends of Parliamentary Reform" in Befast, in 1793, made a declaration of their principles, stating "that the enemies of reform would be answerable to God and their country for the consequences that would ensue, for all the crimes and calamities that would follow".

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CHAPTER VII.

Early Irish Reformers.—The Belfast Resolutions.—The Borough Parliament.—Dr. Hussey and the Union.

The Revolution in France had a great influence on the public mind in Ireland; but, in all probability, the insurrection of 1798 would have taken place, had that revolution never been effected.

The necessity of reform, for the security of parliamentary independence, was strongly felt by the popular party so early as 1790, and that opinion was first acted upon by the northern Presbyterians. Various political clubs, emanating from the Volunteer Associations, had been formed in Belfast, advocating reform and Catholic Emancipation, before either of these questions had gained any ground in the metropolis. The Belfast leaders were so far in advance of those of Dublin on both subjects, that, long before the change in the organization of the United Irish Societies, ulterior views to those they set out with advocating, were entertained by a great many of the former.

The Dublin leaders were chiefly of the Protestant religion, and till the year 1794, reform was not only the ostensible, but the real object they had in view. The Belfast politicians were Presbyterians, and the old leaven of republicanism unquestionably worked more or less in all hostile feelings to parliamentary corruption. Both parties founded their hopes of success for the struggle they had engaged in, on the discontent of the people, who groaned under the burden of the penal laws.

Belfast stood foremost in the early struggle with intolerance and corruption, in the bold discussion of political subjects, and in the dissemination of reform principles. The latter were embodied, in 1793, in a series of papers written

by several persons, called "Thoughts on the British Constitution". This collection of pieces is one of the earliest and the ablest expositions of arguments in detail in favour of reform that is to be met with. Another admirable series of letters on the same subject, under the signature of "Orellana", were written at this time by Dr. Drennan. The subversion of the government was disclaimed by the leaders of the people, and there can be little doubt on the mind of any one who reads the discussions of the Belfast politicians, that, although many of them entertained views that went much farther than reform, it was long before they acted on them, or extended their projects beyond the attempt to strengthen the democratic principle, and to combine the monarchical form of government with republican institutions. They were content to see the constitution restored and perpetuated, though, in the abstract, the predilections of such men as Tone, Neilson, Russell, Emerson, Kelburne, Joy, Simms, M'Cracken, etc., might be in favour of republicanism; but they could not overlook difficulties that lay in the way of any efforts for obtaining that object, and the probability of so far assimilating existing institutions to the latter, by means of reform, as to prevent the evils which had arisen from the monarchical form of government having become (in Ireland at least) an oligarchical one.

To have taken the government out of the more than regal power of Clare and the Beresfords, and restored its usurped authority to the constitutional sovereign of these realms, with the guarantees for protection against the future inroads of this detested oligarchy, which they looked for in reform, would, at any period previous to 1794, have satisfied the expectations of the popular leaders in the north, and cut the ground for ulterior agitation from under the feet of the more violent and uncompromising adherents to republicanism. In Dublin, the popular leaders, at any period previous to 1797, would have gladly accepted the boon, and relinquished the idea of separation. Few of their leading men were, in ordinary circumstances, more than strenuous advocates of constitutional liberty, while those of the north had certainly a considerable portion of their old attachment for republican principles remaining in their politics. But even the most uncompromising of them (and, amongst others, the Rev. Sinclair Kelburne), at a very critical period of their struggle, declared that rather than have recourse to violence, though they might esteem another form of government more perfect, their views went not beyond a government of King, Lords, and Commons, were that government to be the true and real representative of the people. The precise nature of their views, and the extent of them, can only be rightly appreciated by examining their proceedings in 1792 and 1793, and referring to their dis-

cussions and avowed writings. The following extracts, with the exception of the comments on them, are taken from a highly interesting, and now rare, collection of these documents, published in Belfast by their body, and edited by one of them (Henry Joy) in 1794.

The first important movement in Belfast in the cause of reform was the presentation of a petition to the House of Commons, praying for the immediate and unconditional emancipation of Roman Catholics. And this petition is worthy of notice, as being the first that ever emanated in Ireland from a Protestant body in favour of emancipation. The avowed object of its advocates was the promotion of the cause of reform, arising from the conviction that every effort in that cause which did not embrace the interests and enlist the support of the Roman Catholics on its side, must prove abortive. Acting on this opinion, the Society of United Irishmen in Belfast set out with the following declaration of their principles :—

"We have agreed to form an association, to be called 'The Society of United Irishmen': and we do pledge ourselves to our country, and mutually to each other, that we will steadily support and endeavour by all due means to carry into effect the following principles :—

"I. Resolved—That the weight of English influence in the government of this country is so great as to require a cordial union among all the people of Ireland, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our commerce.

"II. That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed, is by a complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in parliament.

"III. That no reform is practicable, efficacious, or just, which shall not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion".

In the beginning of January, 1792, the following requisition was addressed to the inhabitants of Belfast :—

"GENTLEMEN—As men, and as Irishmen, we have long lamented the degrading state of slavery and oppression in which the great majority of our countrymen, the Roman Catholics, are held—nor have we lamented it in silence. We wish to see all distinctions on account of religion abolished —all narrow, partial maxims of policy done away. We anxiously wish to see the day when every Irishman shall be a citizen—when Catholics and Protestants, equally interested in their country's welfare, possessing equal freedom and equal privileges, shall be cordially united, and shall learn to look upon each other as brethren, the children of the same God, the natives of the same land—and when the only strife

amongst them shall be, who shall serve their country best. These, gentlemen, are our sentiments, and these we are convinced are yours.

"We, therefore, request a general meeting of the principal inhabitants at the Townhouse, on Saturday next, at noon, to consider of the propriety of a petition to parliament in favour of our Roman Catholic brethren.

"We are, Gentlemen,

"Your most obedient servants,

Robert Thompson,
Thomas Sinclair,
Robert Simms,
Gil. M'Ilveen, Jun.
Thomas Milliken,
Samuel Neilson,
Samuel M'Tier,
Hu. M'Ilwain,
Wm. M'Cleery,
Wm. Tennent,
Wm. Magee,
Wm. Simms,
Robert Calwell,
Hu. Montgomery,
John M'Donnell,
Henry Haslett,
David Bigger,
John Haslett,
Thos. Neilson,
Thos. M'Donnell,
Robert Hunter,
Thos. M'Cabe,
Wm. Martin,
James M'Cormick,
James Luke,
James M'Kain,
Ham. Thompson,
Hu. Johnson,
Christ. Strong,
George Wells,
James Stephenson,
Sam. M'Clean,
John Graham,
Wm. Bryson,
John Tisdall,
Hugh Crawford,
Robert Getty,
James Hyndman,
Robert Major,
Walter Crawford,
Samuel M'Murray,
Thos. Brown,
John Bankhead,
Isaac Patton,
J. Campbell White,
J. S. Ferguson,
John Todd,
Richard M'Clelland,
John M'Connell,
John M'Clean,
And. M'Clean,
Thos. Ash,
John Caldwell".

Names will be found in the above list which may afford ample food for reflection to the descendants of some of those who bore them, and show abundant reason for being tolerant to others whose opinions may differ from those they now profess. Some names in that list can suggest no other feeling than one of deep concern that the bearers of them—men of high intelligence, and then, at least, of pure and noble principles—should have fallen, or be driven, into desperate courses, and have been reserved for all their evil consequences; and not a few of these gentlemen have been forced to quit their country, and their friends and homes, for ever.

In the year 1816, when Lord Castlereagh came on a pilgrimage (of repentance for his early opinions, perhaps) to the scene of his first exertions in the cause of reform, and honoured with his presence the town of Belfast—the cradle, and then the grave, of public spirit—his lordship was publicly entertained by the ci-devant patriots and ultra-liberals of our Irish Athens. At that dinner the waters of Lethe must have been largely mingled with the wine of the masters of the feast.

The following names recall associations not quite in union with his lordship's repute "in those days of governmental abandonment", which it was not the fashion then in Belfast to mark with a white stone.

Gilbert M'Ilvaine,
Rev. Dr. Bruce,
Narcissus Batt,
Alexander Stewart,
Henry Joy,
Sir James Isaac Bristow,
John M'Cracken,
A. Crawford,
Cunningham Cregg,
Hugh Wilson,
John Sinclair,
Dr. Thompson,
John Vance,
etc., etc., etc.

14th July, 1792.—Belfast Review and Celebration of the French Revolution.

"On Friday evening, the several country corps marched into town, and were billeted on the inhabitants, who were happy in renewing expressions of affection for their neighbours and friends in the fourteenth year since the commencement of reviews, and in the sixteenth of the volunteer era. The number of corps having been considerably reduced, it was not thought proper to call on the Venerable General of the Volunteer Army of Ulster, the Earl of Charlemont, to attend on this occasion. The gentleman appointed in his place was Colonel Sharman, of Moira Castle, who presided with such dignity last year in the civil assembly of the inhabitants of Belfast and its neighbourhood, at the celebration of the French Revolution. An unexpected illness having prevented that justly admired character from filling an office for which he was so eminently qualified, Major Crawford, of Crawford's-burn, was unanimously nominated to act as Reviewing-General, in testimony of the respect due to decided virtue in public and private life.

"On Saturday morning a brigade was formed in High Street, extending from the Bank to the Quay, and the whole were marched off to the old review-ground in the Falls, at about eleven o'clock, by the exercising officer, Major M'Manus.

"On their return to town, at three o'clock, there was a grand procession, the order of which is mentioned under-

neath, and feu-de-joies were fired in Linenhall Street, by the whole body, in honour of that day, which presented the sublime spectacle of near one-sixth of the whole inhabitants of Europe, bursting their chains, and throwing off, almost in an instant, the degrading yoke of slavery.

Order of the Military and Civil Procession.

Major Crawford, General and President for the day.

Belfast Troop of Light Dragoons, Captain Thomas Brown, —17.

Major M'Manus, Exercising Officer,

And his Aides-de-Camp.

Artillery of the Belfast First Company (their number included in that of the corps undermentioned).

The Colours of Five Free Nations, viz.:

Flag of Ireland—motto, "Unite and be free".

Flag of America—motto, "The Asylum of Liberty".

Flag of France—motto, "The Nation, the Law, and the King".

Flag of Poland—motto, "We will support it".

Flag of Great Britain—motto, "Wisdom, Spirit, and Liberality to the People".

"A flag was prepared for the Dutch (but no one could be found to bear it), who were to be represented by a piece of common woollen stuff, half hoisted on a pole, and to be hooted by the populace, on account of the States having joined the wicked conspiracy of tyrants against the Liberties of Man.

Motto, "Heav'ns ! how unlike their Belgian Sires of old !"

Portrait of Dr. Franklin—motto, "Where Liberty is there is my country".

First Brigade of Volunteers—532 men.

Artillery of Belfast Blues.

The Great Standard

elevated on a triumphal car, drawn by four horses, with two Volunteers as supporters, containing on one side of the canvas a representation of

The Releasement of the Prisoners from the Bastile—motto, "Sacred to Liberty".

The reverse contained a figure of Hibernia, one hand and foot in shackles; a Volunteer presenting to her a figure of Liberty.

Motto, "For a People to be **Free**, it is sufficient that they **will it**".

Second Brigade of Volunteers—258 men.

Portrait of Mons. Mirabeau.

"Can the African Slave Trade be morally wrong and politically right ?"

Motto, "Our Gallic Brother was born in 1789; alas ! we are still in embryo".

"Rejoicings for the recent Victories of the French.

"The town of Belfast was almost universally illuminated. Everything demonstrated sincere pleasure in the disgrace of two tyrannical courts, that attempted to dragoon an united nation into that deplorable state of spiritual as well as political bondage, from which it was just recovering, and that dared to tell twenty-five millions of men—**ye shall not be free.**

"In the windows of six or seven houses a number of transparencies presented themselves :—A few of the mottoes are subjoined, as trifling circumstances sometimes mark the disposition of the times.

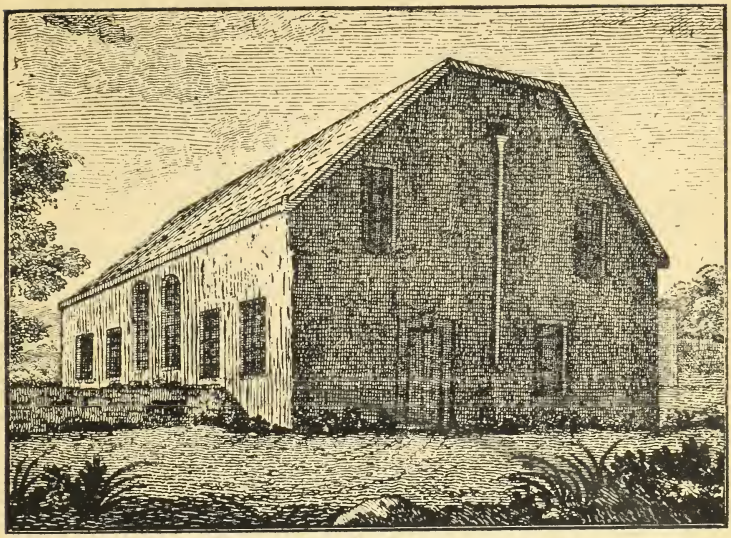
"Perfect Union and equal liberty to the men of Ireland.—Vive la Republique: Vive la Nation.—Church and State divorced.— Liberty triumphant.— The Rights of Man established.—Despotism prostrate.—The Tyrants are fled; let the People rejoice.—Heaven beheld their glorious efforts and crowned their deeds with success—France is Free; so may we: let us will it.—Awake, O ye that sleep.—A gallows suspending an inverted Crown, with these words:' May the fate of every tyrant be that of Capet'.—A check to Despots. —The cause of Mankind triumphant.—Irishmen ! rejoice. —Union among Irishmen.—Rights of Man.—Irishmen ! look at France. Liberty and Equality.

Ireland.

8th Sept. 1783.—Armed Citizens spoke.
2nd Dec. 1783.—Their Delegates ran away.
30th Oct. 1792.—We are taxed, tithed, and enslaved, but we have only to unite and be free.

France.

14th July, 1789—Sacred to Liberty.
10th August, 1792.—The people triumphant.
22nd October, 1792.—Exit of Tyranny.



MEETING HOUSE OF DUNGANNON.
(From an old Print).

"The night closed in the most orderly manner, without either bonfire, or any kind of irregularity whatever.

"The festival concluded with an entertainment at the Donegal Arms, where 104 persons sat down at dinner, when the General, who was also president of the day, announced the toasts prepared by a committee, of which the following is a copy.

"The first Toast—'**The Fourteenth of July, 1789**'.

"The King of Ireland.—The Constitution of France; may it be permanent.—The Constitutional Assembly of France.—The National Assembly of France: may wisdom, spirit, and decision, direct its counsels.—The French army; may an ardent love of their country be held paramount to every other duty in the character of a soldier.—Confusion to the enemies of French liberty. May the Glorious Revolution of France teach the Governments of the Earth wisdom.—May the example of one Revolution prevent the necessity of others.—Lasting freedom and prosperity to the United States of America.—The people of Poland, and success to their aims. The Rights of Man; may all nations have wisdom to understand, and spirit to assert them.—The Union of Irishmen, without which we can never be free.—The Sovereignty of the People, acting by a just and equal repre-

sentation.—The Liberty of the Press.—The Volunteers of Ireland, and their revered General, Earl of Charlemont.—The Constitutional Societies of Great Britain and Ireland.—The Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade.—President Washington.—Stanislaus Augustus: may his example be imitated.—Mr. Paine: may perverted eloquence ever find so able an opposer.—Mr. Fox, and the rights of juries, in substance as well as form.—Mr. Grattan, and the minority of the Irish House of Commons.—The Literary Characters who have vindicated the Rights of Man, and may genius ever be employed in them.—May all Governments be those of the Laws, and all Laws those of the People.—May the free nations of the world vie with each other in promoting liberty, peace, virtue, and happiness, among men.—The increased, increasing, and sacred flame of Liberty.—Ireland.—The cause of freedom.—The memory of John Locke.—The memory of William Molyneux.—The memory of Dr. Franklin.—The memory of Mirabeau.—The memory of Dr. Price.—The memory of Mr. Howard".

Copy of the Address to the National Assembly of France.

"It is not from vanity or ostentation that we, the citizens of Belfast, and citizen-soldiers of that town and neighbourhood, take the liberty of addressing the representative majesty of the French people. We address you with the rational respect due to a title elevated far above all servile and idolatrous adulation, and with that affectionate fraternity of heart which ought to unite man to man in a mutual and inseparable union of interests, of duties, and of rights, which ought to unite nation with nation, into one great republic of the world.

"On a day, sanctified as this has been by a declaration of human rights, the germ of so much good to mankind, we meet with joy together, and wish well to France, to her National Assembly, to her people, to her armies, and to her king.

"May you, legislators, maintain, by the indefatigable spirit of liberty, that constitution which has been planned by the wisdom of your predecessors, and never may you weary in the work you have undertaken, until you can proclaim with triumphant security, it is finished! Manifest to an attentive and progressive world, that is not the frenzy of philosophy, nor the fever of wild and precarious liberty, which could produce such continued agitation; but that imperishable spirit of freedom alone, which always exists in the heart of man, which now animates the heart of Europe, and which, in the event, will communicate its energy throughout the world, invincible and immortal!

"We rejoice, in the sincerity of our souls, that this creative spirit animates the whole mass of mind in France. We auspicate happiness and glory to the human race from every great event which calls into activity the whole vigour of the whole community, amplifies so largely the field of enterprise and improvement, and gives free scope to the universal soul of the empire. We trust that you will never submit the liberties of France to any other guarantees than God and the right hands of the people.

"The power that presumes to modify or to arbitrate with respect to a constitution adopted by the people, is an usurper and a despot, whether it be the meanest of the mob, or the ruler of empires; and if you condescend to negotiate the alteration of a comma in your constitutional code, France from that moment is a slave. Impudent despots of Europe! is it not enough to crush human nature beneath your feet at home, that you thus come abroad to disturb the domestic settlement of the nations around you, and put in motion your armies, those enormous masses of human machinery, to beat down every attempt that man makes for his own happiness?—It is high time to turn these dreadful engines against their inventors, and organized as they have hitherto been for the misery of mankind, to make them now the instruments of its glory and its renovation.

"Success, therefore, attend the armies of France!

"May your soldiers, with whom war is not a trade, but a duty, remember that they do not fight merely for themselves, but that they are the advanced guard of the world: nor let them imagine that the event of the war is uncertain. A single battle may be precarious, not so a few campaigns. There is an omnipotence in a righteous cause, which masters the pretended mutability of human affairs, and fixes the supposed inconsistency of fortune. If you will be free, you must; there is not a chance that one million of resolute men can be enslaved: no power on Earth is able to do it; and will the God of justice and of mercy? Soldiers! there is something that fights for you even in the hearts of your enemies. The native energies of humanity rise up in voluntary array against tyrannical and preposterous prejudice, and all the little cabals of the heart give way to the feelings of nature, of country, and of kind!

"Freedom and prosperity to the people of France! We think that such revolutions as they have accomplished are so far from being out of the order of society, that they spring inevitably from the nature of man and the progression of reason; what is imperfect, he has the power to improve, what he has created, he has a right to destroy. It is a rash opposition to the irresistible will of the public that in some instances has maddened a disposition otherwise mild and magnanimous, turned energy into ferocity, and the

generous and gallant spirit of the French into fury and vengeance. We trust that every effort they now make, every hardship they undergo, every drop of blood they shed, will render their constitution more dear to them.

"Long life and happiness to the King of the French! Not the lord of the soil and its servile appendages, but the king of men who can reserve their rights while they entrust their powers. In this crisis of his fate may he withstand every attempt to estrange him from the nation, to make him an exile in the midst of France, and to prevent him from identifying himself as a magistrate with the constitution, and as a Frenchman with the people.

"We beseech you all, as men, as legislators, as citizens, and as soldiers, in this your great conflict for liberty for France, and for the world, to despise all earthly danger, to look up to God, and to connect your councils, your arms, and your empire to his throne with a chain of union, fortitude, perseverance, morality, and religion.

"We conclude with this fervent prayer: That as the Almighty is dispersing the political clouds which have hitherto darkened our hemisphere, all nations may use the light of Heaven: that, as in this latter age, the Creator is unfolding in His creatures powers which had long lain latent, they may exert them in the establishment of universal freedom, harmony, and peace: may those who are free never be slaves: may those who are slaves be speedily free".

Reply to the preceding address, and that of the Sheffield Societies, from the President of the National Assembly of France, Citizen Gregoire.

"Your addresses to the representatives of the French nation have filled them with pleasing emotions. In imposing on me the honourable duty of a reply, they make me regret that I can but imperfectly express what all with so much energy feel. To have the honour to be a Frenchman or an Englishman, carries with it a title to every degree of mutual affection that can subsist among men.

"The curious in your country are pleased to traverse the globe in order to explore nature; henceforth they can visit Mont Blanc (Savoy) without quitting France; in other words, without leaving their friends. The day on which free Savoy unites itself with us, and that on which children of high-minded England appear among us, are, in the eye of reason, days of triumph. Nothing is wanting in

these affecting scenes but the presence of all Great Britain, to bear testimony to the enthusiasm with which we are inspired by the name of liberty, and that of the people with whom we are about to form eternal alliance.

"The National Convention has wished to testify its satisfaction to the English, in decreeing that they would conduct in the presence of some of them the trial of the last of their kings. Sixty ages have elapsed since kings first made war on liberty: the most miserable pretexts have been sufficient for them to spread trouble over the Earth. Let us recollect with horror that under the reign of Anne, the falling of a pair of gloves, and that under Louis XIV., a window opening from one apartment into another, were sufficient causes for deluging Europe in blood.

"Alas ! short is the duration prescribed by eternal power to our weak existence; and shall then the ferocious ambition of some individuals embitter or abridge our days with impunity? Yet a little moment, and despots and their cannons shall be silenced: philosophy denounces them at the bar of the universe, and history, sullied with their crimes, has drawn their characters. Shortly the annals of mankind will be those of virtue; and in the records of France, a place will be reserved for our testimonies of fraternity with the British and Irish societies, but especially for the Constitutional Society of London.

"Doubtless the new year which is now approaching will see all your rights restored. The meeting of your parliament attracts our attention. We hope that then philosophy will thunder by the mouth of eloquence, and that the English will substitute the great charter of Nature in place of the great charter of King John.

"The principles upon which our own republic has been founded, have been discovered by the celebrated writers of your nation; we have taken possession of their discoveries in the social art, because truths revealed to the world are the property of all mankind. A people which has brought reason to maturity will not be content with liberty by halves; it will doubtless refuse to capitulate with despotism.

"Generous Britons ! let us associate for the happiness of the human race; let us destroy every prejudice; let us cause useful knowledge to filter through every branch of the social tree; let us inspire our equals with a sense of their dignity; let us teach them, above all, that vices are the inseparable companions of slavery; and let us depend upon it, that our efforts will be favoured by the God of liberty, who weighs the destiny of empires, and holds in His hands the fate of nations".

Extracts from the Belfast address to the people of Ireland.

"Trained from our infancy in a love of freedom and an abhorrence of tyranny, we congratulate our brethren of France and ourselves, that the infamous conspiracy of slaves and despots, against the happiness and glory of that admired and respected nation, and against the common rights of man, has hitherto proved abortive.

"Impressed as we are with a deep sense of the excellence of our constitution as it exists in theory, we rejoice that we are not, like our brethren in France, reduced to the hard necessity of tearing up inveterate abuse by the roots, even where utility was so intermixed as not to admit of separation. Ours is an easier and a less unpleasing task; to remove with a steady and a temperate resolution, the abuses which the lapse of many years' inattention and supineness in the great body of the people, and unremitting vigilance in their rulers to invade and plunder them of their rights, have suffered to overgrow and to deform that beautiful system of government, so admirably suited to our situation, our habits, and our wishes. We have not to innovate, but to restore. The just prerogatives of our monarch we respect and will maintain. The constitutional power of the peers of the realm we wish not to invade. We know that in the exercise of both, abuses have grown up; but we also know that those abuses will be at once corrected, so as never again to recur, by restoring to us, **the people,** what we, for ourselves, demand as our right, our due weight and influence in that estate, which is our property, the representation of the people in parliament.

"But while we thus state our sentiments on the subject of reform, we feel it incumbent upon us to declare, as we now do, that no reform, were even such attainable, would answer our ideas of utility or justice, which should not equally include all sects and denominations of Irishmen.

"We have now declared our sentiments to the world. In declaring them, we spurn with equal disdain, restraint, whether proceeding from a mob or a monarch— from a riot or a proclamation. We look with a mixture of abomination and contempt on the transactions which, on the last anniversary of the French Revolution, degraded the national character of England; when neither the learning, the piety, the public spirit, nor the private virtue of a Priestley could protect him from the savage fury of the vilest of an ignorant and a bigoted rabble".

Reform marched onward steadily toward revolution, from 1792 to 1793 and 1794.

JAMES CAULFIELD, 1st Earl of Charlemont. Born in Dublin, August, 1728, Raised volunteers to repel the threatened French invasion, 1760. Supported Grattan's efforts to obtain legislative independence. Elected Commander-in-Chief of the Irish Volunteers in 1780. Nothwithstanding his love of liberty Charlemont did not support the Catholic claims, and was averse to Parliamentary reform. He died in August, 1799, and was interred in Armagh Cathedral. Charlemont was a distinguished scholar, and a close friend of Burke, Goldsmith, Johnson and Hogarth. Owing to his exertions the Royal Irish Academy was founded in 1786.

The Declaration of the Belfast Light Dragoons.

John Burden in the Chair.

"An authentic declaration of the public opinion being now necessary, both for the direction of the legislature and the people, and as the country is not yet, we trust, so far degraded, that its unanimous and persevering demands upon any point of government, can be finally unsuccessful: We, the members of the Belfast Light Dragoons, have assembled, in order to declare our political sentiments, viz:—

"I. We deem that a government by a King, Lords, and Commons, the Commons being freely and frequently chosen by the people, is that best adapted to the genius of this country.

"II. That the object of the people is not to introduce, but to abolish novelties, such as venal boroughs, octennial parliaments, and pensioned representatives; what we reprobate is new—what we venerate is **ancient.**

"III. That we are determined to continue our exertions, until we obtain an impartial representation of **all** the people, ignorant of any principle by which a religious denomination should be excluded; nor could it be the intention of our ancestors to abridge a man of civil freedom, because he exercised religious liberty.

"IV. That the only trusty safeguard of a country is an armed and disciplined people; we will, therefore, continue embodied, and in the use of arms, until we shall obtain the objects of our wishes; and then we will continue in arms that we may defend them.

HU. M'ILWAIN, Sec., B.L.D.

"16th January, 1793".

Extracts from the Declaration of the Friends of Parliamentary Reform in Belfast.—10th Jan. 1793.

Waddell Cunningham in the Chair.

"Several years have elapsed since many of the wisest and best men in England, Scotland, and Ireland, stimulated their countrymen to demand a Parliamentary Reform, under a conviction that it would conduce as much to the stability of government as to the liberty of the people. Had that demand been unreasonable, or that reform unnecessary, both would long since have been forgotten or remained neglected. But that demand has gained strength by age, and the people, instead of being lulled into indolence, are in danger of being roused into fury.

"Those honest patriots who first excited the people, and offered their best advice to the government, are now called upon to remind and forewarn administration of the consequences of their former supineness and their present obstinacy. They also exerted themselves in keeping alive some respect for the constitution, and some regard to peace, together with hope of redress. But if their exhortations to government be slighted, they feel that their influence with the people will be equally disregarded. They will then be reduced to a dilemma, which cannot long hold them in suspense. They must take part with government, or they must enlist under the banners of the public. They must either co-operate in establishing a tyranny in their country, or rush into the intemperate measures of an indignant multitude. They may be obliged to renounce an infatuated court, or to meet their dearest relations and friends in arms. Some may seek a remote retreat, and lament in silence the miseries and the crimes by which their native land shall be overwhelmed; but the more numerous and vigorous party will assuredly, after struggling in vain against the torrent, plunge into the flood of civil contest. They may endeavour to regulate its course and moderate its rage; but they will give it strength and perseverance. They will not be found among the least formidable enemies or the least active patriots.

"We wish not to insinuate that there exists at present any party hostile to a peaceable settlement. If there be, we know it not. But this we know, that the public mind is in a ferment; that the public arm is strong; and that the most desperate proposals may speedily become the most grateful.

"We, therefore, who have always sought for reform within the limits of the constitution, and studied to combine liberty with peace, have determined not to slacken our exertions for the attainment of the one and the preservation of the other. We have resolved that, whatever may be the result of the present crisis, we shall be blameless; and that neither our rulers nor our fellow-subjects shall have cause to accuse us either of intemperance or remissness. But we must at the same time solemnly declare, that if the just demands of the people be despised, those who refuse and those who resist redress will be answerable to posterity, to their country, and to God, for all the crimes and calamities that may follow.

"In order to avert these evils as much as in us lies, by promoting the objects recited above, we have associated under the title of the "Friends of a Parliamentary Reform", and have drawn up the following fundamental principles, in the hopes that all who approve of their spirit will follow our example, by forming societies of the same kind.

"Principles.

"I. A constitution, composed of the King, Lords, and People, the latter fully and equally represented in a House of Commons, we prefer to every other, as admirably suited to the genius, wishes, and interests of Ireland.

"II. The present mode of representation is absurd, unequal, and inadequate, contrary to the spirit of our own, and of every free government.

"III. We assert that the basis of election should be extended to the people of every religious denomination.

"With a constitution so modelled as to restore the just rights of the collective body, without infringing on the prerogative of the crown or on the dignity of the peerage, we think this nation, whose loyalty has ever kept pace with its love of freedom, will be satisfied and rest content".

At a Meeting of the Third Society of United Irishmen, in the Town of Belfast, 3rd October, 1792.

Mr. Clotworthy Birnie in the Chair.

The declaration was agreed to, from which the following extracts are taken:

"Associated, as we are, for the purpose of producing an union of interest and affection among all the inhabitants of Ireland, we abhor the idea of withholding from our Roman Catholic brethren their civil and religious rights, at the time that we would wish to enjoy those rights ourselves.

"We are persuaded that the religion of any man, and his politics, are not necessarily connected: on the contrary, that the former ought not to have any connection with the latter. In a civil view there undoubtedly is a communion of interests and rights, and every individual who contributes to the support of the state, ought to have a voice in framing the laws which regulate that state. But religion is personal; the individual alone accountable; we, therefore, deem it impious to intrude between his conscience and that Almighty Being who alone knoweth his heart.

"We assert that the right of petitioning in the subject, of whatever denomination, is not only natural, but perfectly agreeable to the spirit of our constitution; and we confess ourselves ignorant of any mode by which our Catholic brethren could have so peaceably collected and expressed their sentiments as by delegation".

If the reader be struck with surprise at the influence of French politics on the minds of the Belfast leaders in some of the preceding documents—at the extravagant hopes

founded on the revolution in that country—at the extraordinary excitement displayed by its admirers, in their fantastic celebration of its victories, or the anniversary of its outbreak—he cannot fail likewise to have been struck, even in despite of the extravagance manifested on some occasions, at the exhibition of talent and enthusiasm in the cause of reform on the part of its first advocates; and especially when he examines the discussions and proceedings of those men of the movement party of 1793 and 1794; at their enlightened views on the subject of civil and religious liberty, which were then so much in advance of the opinions of their countrymen. The policy was worthier of the Grand Vizier of Constantinople than of the British minister, which made rebels of many of those men who then advocated the questions of reform and emancipation.

Account from the "Belfast Newsletter" of a Military Riot in Belfast, on Saturday, 9th of March, 1793.

"About three-quarters of an hour after six o'clock in the evening, a body of the 17th Dragoons, intermixed with a few others of the military, rushed out from their quarters, and drove furiously through most of the principal streets, with their sabres drawn, cutting at any one that came in their way, and attacking houses. This lasted near an hour, when, through the interference of magistrates and some military officers, the party were dispersed. In the course of this business, the windows of a number of the inhabitants were broken, and some signs torn down. A great number of persons were slightly wounded, who had taken no part in the affray. Charles Ranken, Esq., a justice of peace for the county of Antrim, in endeavouring to take an artilleryman, and after commanding His Majesty's peace by virtue of his office, was repeatedly stabbed at and in a slight degree wounded. Mr. Campbell, surgeon, happening to be in a street through which the party were driving, one of them ran across it, and made several cuts at him, some of which penetrated through his clothes and slightly wounded him. The windows of a milliner's shop were broken, in which cockades were hung up for sale. A man had his ear and his hand cut with a sword. Happily no lives were lost, and to the prudence and quiet demeanour of the towns-people it was owing.

"The houses which suffered most were those of Mr. M'Cabe, watchmaker; Mr. Orr, chandler; Mr. Watson, on the Quay; Mr. Johnson and Mr. Sinclair, public-house keepers in North Street; and the shop of Miss Wills, a milliner, in High Street. Their malice seemed principally

levelled at the Volunteers. Two of the dragoons received ample punishment from the swords of their officers. The consternation of the town may be easily supposed.

"Two causes have been assigned for this unprovoked disturbance: viz., that there was a sign of Dumurier at a small public-house in North Street; and that a blind fiddler who plays through the streets at night, happened to be playing "Ca Ira," a French air. With respect to the sign, it was erected before there was any prospect of a war with France, and the circumstance of its being there could not be countenanced by the people, for few had ever heard of it till the riot brought it into notice. As to the tune played by a blind mendicant, it is too trifling a cause to be seriously mentioned, though he deposed on oath that he never knew the tune in question.

"As soon as intelligence of the riot reached the officers of the troops at the barrack mess, they used much activity in suppressing it. Great praise is due to the exertions of the magistrates; but the rapidity with which the party forced their way through the town, made it impracticable to suppress it till the injury was done. The gentleman who commands the regiment now in barracks, Captain M'Donnel, signalized himself by the most active exertions; and his regiment, the 55th, behaved extremely well. The circumstance of General Whyte's absence on other necessary duty, was much regretted; but he returned to town instantly on hearing of the matter. A guard of four hundred and fifty Volunteers sat up during the night, and no further harm ensued.

"On Sunday, the Sovereign, by request, called a meeting of the town at three o'clock, to consider of the best means of preserving the peace, and bringing the offenders to punishment. In the mean time, Major-General Whyte had arrived from Carrickfergus, and gave assurances of his earnest desire to co-operate with the civil power in bringing the offenders to punishment, and promoting the security and peace of the town. A committee was appointed by the town meeting to inquire into the cause of the disturbances, and report to a future one, to be convened by them as soon as their report was ready. This committee consisted of twenty-two, amongst whom were the Sovereign, High Constable, and all the magistrates resident in town. This committee, according to instruction, sat at a quarter past six on Sunday evening. General Whyte was invited to attend as a member, which he seemed rather to decline, but desired an interview with the committee, to whom he repeated his good wishes for the peace of the town, and expressed his wish and his reasons for desiring that the Volunteers who were assembled, to the number of four hundred and fifty, would disperse, as he had ordered a patrol of officers, and a

strong guard of the 55th regiment, who have always behaved with great order and regularity, and at the same time pledged himself to call upon the inhabitants, and join them himself, if any necessity required it. A deputation was immediately sent from the committee to the Volunteers, with a paper stating these facts, and requesting them to separate, which they instantly complied with.

"Saturday night, May, 25, 1793, exhibited another of those military affrays to which this town has been subjected for some time past. We do not wish to enter into a detail of the violences committed; suffice it to say, that some of the inhabitants were dangerously wounded, none mortally. Mr. Birnie, who received a stab in his back, and was otherwise much hurt, is in a fair way of recovery.

"It is generally believed Mr. Birnie would have been killed, had it not been for the spirited exertions of Captain Barber and Lieutenant George, in aid of the Sovereign.

"On Monday evening, the 15th of April, about eight o'clock, a party of the artillery and 38th regiment, who had arrived in this town on Friday last, attacked a sign of the late Doctor Franklin, which, being made of copper and hung with iron, had withstood the sabres of the 17th Dragoons, but on this occasion was laid prostrate by the assistance of a rope. They then attacked and pulled down the sign over the newspaper office of the "Northern Star". What their next enterprise would have been we know not; but at this period the arrival of the Sovereign and a number of their officers, put a stop to the evening's amusement. The signs, which had been removed to some distance, were abandoned to their proper owners, and immediately replaced. None of the inhabitants were hurt on the occasion".

The letting loose of the military on the inhabitants of Belfast, was tantamount to a declaration of war, with their political societies and their volunteer members and promoters.

The "Volunteers" in 1793 intimated plainly the objects they had in view would be accomplished by force if necessary. The lawyers' corps adopted the motto, "Inter arma leges"; another corps took the name of National Guards, and placed on their banners the significant device of a harp without a crown. The Maghera corps, in 1792, had made a declaration of their political sentiments, in which they stated that "they would not be deterred from their duty until their country should taste the sweets of freedom, and they plucked the fruit from the tree of liberty". One of the last memorable acts of the Irish Whig Club was the presentation to the crown of a petition (known to be drawn up by Mr. Grattan) to the King, setting forth the various acts of oppression and injustice on the part of several administrations in Ireland, from 1792 to 1798. In this admirable

document the recent insurrection is clearly and irrefragably shown to be the result of their measures: the dishonour brought on both houses so early as 1792, by the scandalously open and shamefully avowed sale of the peerage to procure seats in the Commons; the people's confidence in parliament destroyed; the unconstitutional nature of the act of 33 George III., to prevent what was called unlawful assemblies of the people under pretence of preparing petitions or other addresses to the crown or the parliament; the rigour of the Gunpowder and Convention Bills in 1793; the persecutions of the people on the part of the Orangemen in the north, sanctioned and protected in 1790 by a bill of indemnity; the partiality exhibited in the resolutions brought forward in the House of Commons by the Attorney-General in that year, as a kind of supplement to his Insurrection Act, wherein all the disturbances of the four preceding years are ascribed to the Defenders, and not a syllable is mentioned of the atrocities of the Peep-of-Day Boys, committed on the people, who, having no protection to look to from the law, were compelled, in self-defence, to resist their exterminators; the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Bill, in 1797; the extreme severity of military government; Lord Carhampton's wholesale transportation of the people, without trial or legal proof of guilt; General Lake's death-denouncing proclamation; the free quarters in the country; the proscription of the Catholics; the burning of their dwellings and their chapels; and lastly, in a country where female chastity was held in the highest respect, the licentiousness of the military rabble, who, in the words of their commander-in-chief, at a later period, were "formidable to all except the enemy".

These are the topics which are treated of in this able document; and it is impossible to bestow our attention on them, without coming to the conclusion that the people were deliberately exasperated and driven into rebellion, with a view of breaking down the energies of the country, and thus enabling the British minister to accomplish the long-projected measure of the Union.

It would betray a disposition to mislead, or a state of mind apt and indolently willing to be misled, to consider the origin of the confederacy of the United Irishmen, and the nature of their designs, without reference to the constitution of the Irish Parliament, and the actual condition of the country in regard to representation, and the enjoyment, or reasonable prospect of enjoyment, of political, civil, and religious privileges, by the great mass of the people, or the middle class, which comprised in its several ranks the active energies, industrial, commercial, and professional intellectuality of the communities in towns and cities, at the

period of the formation of the first society of United Irishmen.

In the numerous works devoted to the subject of Irish parliamentary independence, it is very strange how this subject has been allowed to pass unnoticed, or rather how sedulously it has been avoided.

A very remarkable, authentic, and most complete document, entitled "Table of Parliamentary Patronage for Ireland, 1793", is to be found in a periodical of great merit in its day, "The Anthologia Hibernica", for October, 1793, p. 268. This valuable document, lost sight of as it now is in an obsolete publication, it is well to reproduce, for the important facts which are concealed beneath it are of marvellous significance; they speak more than many volumes that have been written, of a state of parliamentary corruption and degradation unparalleled in parliamentary history.

We find by this document that the number of members returned to the Irish parliament by peers was one hundred and thirty-four ! ! and the number of members who owed their seats to the patronage and influence of commoners was ninety-four ! ! ! so that in the Irish House of Commons, which in the year 1793, consisted of three hundred members (one hundred and ninety-six of whom were returned for ninety-eight boroughs), no less than two hundred and twenty-eight members were returned either by peers, nominated by them, or who obtained their seats by the influence of patrons; and the remaining independent seventy-two members, as well as the others, represented Protestant constituencies exclusively, the great mass of the population, who were Catholics, being wholly unrepresented in the Irish House of Commons, when that parliament assembled on the 10th of January, 1793.

"The Table of Parliamentary Patronage for Ireland, 1793", is the more reliable on account of the politics of the writer who communicates it. He declares himself strenuously opposed to reform, and deprecates any extension of the franchise or change in the existing system of representation, as an innovation sure to lead to anarchy and confusion. This remarkable document will be found in the Appendix.

Such another witness as the person who prepared the "Table of Parliamentary Patronage of Ireland in 1793", is Lord Chancellor Clare, a few years later in his place in parliament.

Lord Clare, in his celebrated speech on the Irish Union, said: "Cromwell's first act was to collect all the native Irish who had survived the general desolation and remained in the country, and to transplant them into the province of Connaught, which had been completely depopulated and laid waste in the progress of the rebellion. They were

ordered to retire there by a certain day, and forbidden to repass the river Shannon on pain of death; and this sentence of deportation was rigorously enforced until the Restoration. Their ancient possessions were seized and given up to the conquerors, as were the possessions of every man who had taken part in the rebellion, or followed the fortunes of the king after the murder of Charles I. And this whole fund was distributed amongst the officers and soldiers of Cromwell's army, in satisfaction of the arrears of their pay, and adventurers who had advanced money to defray the expenses of the war. And thus a new colony of new settlers, composed of the various sects which then infested England, —Independents, Anabaptists, Seceders, Brownists, Socinians, Millinarians, and dissenters of every description, many of them infected with the leaven of democracy, poured into Ireland, and were put in possession of the ancient inheritance of its inhabitants. And I speak with great personal respect of the men, when I state that a very considerable portion of the opulence and power of the kingdom of Ireland centres at this day in the descendants of this motley collection of English adventurers.

"It seems evident from the whole tenor of the declaration made by Charles II. at his restoration, that a private stipulation had been made by Monck, in favour of Cromwell's soldiers and adventurers, who had been put into possession of the confiscated lands in Ireland; and it would have been an act of gross injustice on the part of the king to have overlooked their interests. The civil war of 1641 was a rebellion against the Crown of England, and the complete reduction of the Irish rebels by Cromwell redounded essentially to the advantage of the British empire. But admitting the principle in its fullest extent, it is impossible to defend the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, by which it was carried into effect; and I could wish that the modern asserters of Irish dignity and independence would take the trouble to read and understand them.

"I will not detain the house with a minute detail of the provisions of this act, thus passed for the settlement of Ireland; but I wish gentlemen who call themselves the dignified and independent Irish nation, to know that seven million eight hundred thousand acres of land were set out, under the authority of this act, to a motley crew of English adventurers, civil and military, nearly to the total exclusion of the old inhabitants of the island; many of whom were innocent of the rebellion, lost their inheritance, as well for the difficulties imposed upon them by the Court of Claims in the proofs required of their innocence, as from a deficiency in the fund for reprisal to English adventurers, arising principally from a profuse grant made by the Crown to the Duke of York; and the parliament of Ireland having made

this settlement of the island in effect on themselves, granted an hereditary revenue to the crown. It is a subject of curious and important speculation to look back to the forfeitures of Ireland, incurred in the last century. The superficial contents of the island are calculated at 11,420,682 acres. Let us now examine the state of forfeitures :—

Confiscated in the reign of James I. the whole of the province of Ulster, containing, acres,	...	2,836,837
Set out by the Court of Claims at the Restoration, acres,	...	7,800,000
Forfeitures of 1688, acres,	...	1,060,792
Total	...	11,697,629

"So that the whole of your island has been confiscated, with the exception of the estates of five or six old families of English blood, some of whom had been attainted in the reign of Henry VIII., but recovered their possessions before Tyrone's rebellion, and had the good fortune to escape the pillage of the English republic inflicted by Cromwell; and no inconsiderable portion of the island has been confiscated twice, or perhaps thrice, in the course of a century. The situation, therefore, of the Irish Nation at the Revolution, stands unparalleled in the history of the inhabited world.

"What, then, was the situation of Ireland at the Revolution ? and what is it at this day ? The whole power and property of the country has been conferred by successive monarchs of England upon an English colony, composed of three sets of adventurers, who poured into this country at the termination of three successive rebellions. Confiscation is their common title; and from the first settlement, they have been hemmed in on every side by the old inhabitants of the island, brooding over their discontents in sullen indignation".

This state of things in Ireland has to be taken into account before we pronounce a sweeping judgment on the desperate course adopted by the United Irishmen, or wonder at the conduct of certain Catholic prelates in Ireland in 1799 and 1800, who were not prepared to take their stand by the side of the advocates of parliamentary independence. We may also read in the "Memoirs of Lord Castlereagh" (vols. I. and II. passim), and in those of Grattan, with feelings, perhaps, of more pain than surprise, "that in the hopes of obtaining from a British parliament, that which the Irish parliament had, so much to its cost, refused, four metropolitan and six diocesan Catholic bishops, who had been led to give their countenance to the Union, were induced,

through the intrigues of Lord Castlereagh, to sign resolutions in favour of a royal veto in the appointment of those prelates".*

The following letter of a very remarkable man, will throw some light on the subject:—

Extract from a Letter of the Rev. Dr. Hussey to Bernard Clinch, Esq.

London, January 10.
(no year, probably 1800).

. . . . "As to your union, whatever my reason may tell me upon a cool inquiry, my feelings rejoice at it. I told the Chancellor of your Exchequer here, that I would prefer a union with the Beys and Mamelukes of Egypt to that of being under the iron road of the Mamelukes of Ireland; but, alas! I fear that a union will not remedy the ills of poor Erin. The remnants of old oppression and new opinions that lead to anarchy (to use the words of a foolish milk-and-water letter), still keep the field of battle, and until one side be defeated, the country is not safe. Another project upon which I have been consulted, is, to grant salaries, or pension, to the Catholic clergy of the higher and lower order. The conditions upon which they are to be granted, as first proposed to me, are directly hostile to the interests of religion, and, taken in the most favourable point of view, must be detrimental to the Catholics, by cutting asunder the slender remaining ties between the pastor and his flock, by turning the discipline and laws of the Church into a mercantile, political speculation, and must end in making the people unbelievers, and consequently Jacobins upon the French scale. Whether the prelates of Ireland have courage or energy enough to oppose any such project so hurtful to religion, I will not say. Indeed, the infernal Popery laws have lessened the courage of the clergy, as well as destroyed the honesty and morals of the people, and my affection for my native land is not so effaced as to enable me to say with our countryman after he had gone to bed, 'Arrah, let the house burn away; what do I care, who am only a lodger?' I request you will write to me by post, as long and as minutely as your avocations will permit. How many students have you? Why do all the children of the nobility and gentry come over to school here, and to very indifferent schools, too, instead of going to yours? They will soon become as stupid and as prejudiced as English Catholics.

"Yours faithfully,
"T. HUSSEY".

* "Grattan's Memoirs", vol. v., 375.

Grattan, in his valedictory address to his constituents in 1797, carried away by the force of circumstances and his feelings of bitter disappointment with respect to the constitution of Ireland, proclaims the lamentable conviction he had come to, that there was no soundness, no effective power for good, no principle of patriotism, existing in the Irish parliament.

"The greater part of the Irish boroughs were creations by the house of Stewart, for the avowed purpose of modelling and subverting the parliamentary constitution of Ireland: these are understated when they are called abuses in the constitution; they were gross and monstrous violations, recent and wicked innovations, and fatal usurpations in the constitution, by kings whose family lost their kingdom for crimes less deadly to freedom, and who, in their Star Chamber tyranny, in their court of high commission, in their ship money, or in their dispensing power, did not commit an act so diabolical in intention, so mortal in principle, or so radically subversive of the fundamental rights of the realm, as the fabrication of boroughs, which is the fabrication of a court parliament, and the exclusion of a constitutional commons, and which is a subversion, not of the fundamental laws, but of the constitutional law-giver; you banish that family for other acts, but you retain that act by which you have banished the commons. The birth of the borough inundation was the destruction of liberty and property. James I., who made that inundation, by that means destroyed the titles of his Irish subjects to their lands; the robbery of his liberty was followed by the robbery of his property. This king had an instrument more subtile and more pliable than the sword, and, against the liberty of the subject, more cold and deadly; a court influence that palls itself in the covering of the constitution, and in her name plants the dagger—a Borough Parliament".*

Lord Fitzwilliam, in a letter to Plowden, the historian, dated 26th Sept., 1803, observes: "This work has brought before the public this truth, little known and little thought of, that the Irish nation has consisted of two distinct and separate people, the English and the native Irish, the conqueror and the conquered; and that this distinction has been systematically and industriously kept up, not by the animosity of the conquered, but by the policy of the conqueror".†

The janissaries of this system of government, the ascendency faction of Ireland, are thus characterized by

* Grattan's valedictory address, quoted in the speech of the Right Hon. the Earl of Clare, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, in the House of Lords in Ireland, on the Union, February, 10, 1800.

† "Grattan's Life", by his son, vol. v., p. 235.

Grattan, in his well-known letter, dated from Twickenham, November 9, 1798, referring to "that Irish faction which stands at the head of a bloody combination":—

"I look on them as the cause of every evil that has of late fallen on their country. I protest that I do not know a faction which, considering the very small measure of their credit and ability, has done so much mischief to their king and country. They opposed the restoration of the constitution of Ireland; they afterwards endeavoured to betray and undermine it; they introduced a system of corruption unknown in the annals of parliament. They then proclaimed that corruption so loudly, so scandalously, and so broadly, that one of them was obliged to deny in one house the notorious expressions he had used in another. They accompanied these offences by an abominable petulance of invective, uttered from time to time against the great body of the people of Ireland; and having, by such proceedings and such discourse, lost their affection, they resorted to a system of coercion to support a system of torture, attendant on a conspiracy of which their crimes was the cause; and now their country displays a most extraordinary contest, when an Englishman at the head of its government struggles to spare the Irish people, and an Irish faction presses to shed their blood. I repeat it, I do not know a faction more dangerous, more malignant, or more sanguinary".

* * * *

CHAPTER VIII.

The First Designs of the United Irishmen were directed mainly to Reform and the overthrow of the Ascendency Faction. The Aims of the Government in 1798.

The political convulsions which agitated Europe at the close of the eighteenth and the commencement of the nineteenth centuries, have passed from the turmoil of cotemporary events, to take their place for ever in the sober records of history. The shadows, clouds, and darkness, which the heat of passions, the fury of parties, and the violence of selfish interest, threw around every event of that period, have been dissipated and dispelled since the passions have cooled, the parties disappeared, and the interests dwindled away, which were then predominant. England can do justice to the reformers of 1794; can bear to have their merits

shown and their errors displayed. Scotland has already enrolled the names of Muir and Palmer in the list of those who had loved their country "not wisely, but too well". It remained that the history of the United Irishmen should be written fearlessly and fairly; that the wrongs by which they were goaded to resistance, the nature of the political evils they desired to remove, the good at which they aimed, and the errors into which they were betrayed, should be inquired into and set forth.

However party writers may labour to distort events, sooner or later facts will make themselves known, and show their strength in their original dimensions. It is well that men of the present generation should know how few are the years which suffice to wither away the veil which corruption and venality or treachery have had drawn over their delinquencies; how soon the sons may be compelled to blush for their fathers' deeds, and destined to suffer for them. Faction is proverbially short-sighted; but in Ireland it seems to be stone-blind—neither enlightened by the past, nor speculating on the future.

To elucidate a period of Irish, or rather British history, which the most unscrupulous of all factions has made a favourite subject of its mendacious productions, has been the great object of the writer of these volumes. Setting out with a determination "to extenuate nought, and to set down nought in malice", he has devoted time, labour, and expense, to the task of collecting documents, which, in the ordinary course of events, must soon have been lost irrevocably—documents from which any reasonable reader, unprejudiced by party, may be able to form a correct estimate of the motives and actions of men who have hitherto been praised and blamed with very little reference to the real circumstances of their conduct or their principles.

The object of this work is not to revive the remembrance of past evils, with the view of promoting any party interest, but with the design of preventing the possibility of the recurrence of the crimes and sufferings of those bad times. The policy of former governmental regime in Ireland, which availed itself of the agency of an intolerant, sanguinary, insolent, selfish, truculent, and overbearing faction (far less fanatical than hypocritical), for the accomplishment of purposes of state, has ceased to exist; but the spirit of that faction has undergone no change, and with diminished power to indulge its savage instincts, the activity of its ancient enmities to the faith and civil rights of the great mass of the Irish people, is displayed ever and anon as prominently as ever, in sordid efforts to make its influence seem formidable to government, and its services worthy of being bought or remunerated in any manner.

It is not unprofitable, even now, to reflect on the use which partizans of this ascendency faction made of their power in those bad times, when every man who became obnoxious to their body, by taking a prominent part in any political proceedings opposed to their views and interests, was accounted disaffected to the state; and even when loyal men, indignant at the treatment they received, were driven by unfounded accusations and dishonourable suspicions into criminal courses. It behoves the persons who take any leading part in liberal politics, to recur a little to past events, and to recall the first agitation of the question of reform in Ireland, and the subsequent fate of a great number of the men who were its early advocates.

In Ireland the ascendency party marked out its political opponents at that period, as covert traitors, who were to be legally removed at a convenient opportunity. It panted only for the exercise of "that vigour beyond the law", which was the privilege of its exclusive loyalty. Its victims were not the least influential, the least estimable, the most insignificant of the opposing party. The public service was made the pretext for the destruction of opponents, and with those pretexts they filled the prisons of the land.

Little do the people of England know of the class of persons who were driven into rebellion in 1798 in Ireland. They may probably have heard that a number of obscure, ill disposed, and reckless men had engaged in an unnatural and unprovoked insurrection, and were executed; that the leaders of it were poor, discontented, ill-disposed wretches, persons of no standing in society, Papists of ultramontane principles, under the guidance of priests goaded or seduced into sedition. If Englishmen read this work, they will find that a great portion of the leaders of the United Irishmen were gentlemen by birth, education, and profession; many of them celebrated for their talents, respected for their private worth; several of them scholars who had distinguished themselves in the University of Dublin; the majority of them members of the Established Church; some of them Presbyterian ministers; few, if any, of them who did not exert more or less influence over their countrymen. While Scotland preserves the memory of those who fell in the Rebellion of 1745,—while their lives and actions are recorded by loyal Scotchmen, and read by loyal Englishmen, there can be no reason why the reminiscences of the Irish Rebellion of 1798, and of those who unfortunately were engaged in it, should not be faithfully recorded, without prejudice to the loyalty of the writer or the reader of their history.

We have outlived the wrongs that made rebels of these men.

In our times their descendents are possessed of rights, for the enjoyment of which they have reason to be good and loyal subjects. It is now, not only their duty, but their interest to be so.

Their fathers lived at a period when the great body of the people laboured under grievous wrongs. They thought, perhaps erroneously, that "tyranny was not government, and that allegiance was due only to protection".

There is a degree of oppression, which we are told by Divine authority, drives even "wise men mad". Whether the wrongs of the Irish people, and their sufferings at the hands of the domineering faction in power in this country, under the Pale policy and under the penal code, amounted to that degree of exasperation, the reader must determine. Their leaders certainly acted on that belief, that their grievances had reached, and passed, the limits of human patience.

One who has seen the miserable effects of political commotions and revolutions in other countries, is not likely to regard engagement in similar struggles as the result, at all times, of the exercise of the highest courage or the purest patriotism,—or to consider the advantages obtained by force or violence, on many occasions, worth the perils, terrors, and penalties of the strife.

In the times of the United Irishmen, that dependence on the power of public opinion for the redress of political grievances, which has now happily superseded the employment of physical force, was unknown, and every political measure of great magnitude was carried either by the menace of violence, or recourse to the demonstration of it.

No party seemed sensible of the awful responsibility of those, who "let loose the dogs of war" on the country; and the leading men of the society of United Irishmen, who first had recourse to violent means for affecting their objects, were themselves less aggrieved by the unjust and partial laws they sought to overturn, than the great mass of the people, who were oppressed and borne down by them.

But where there is tyranny that "grinds the faces of the poor" and galls the hearts of the people, it is not the wise or the reflecting who are first driven to revolt, but the multitude, whose passions are exasperated, whose labour is robbed, or privileges invaded; who are goaded to madness by a bad government, and, in the first outbreak of their fury, whose vengeance bursts forth in the form of a wild justice, bootless of results, badly directed, indefinite in its objects, and, at the onset, striking at all around, like a drunken man in a quarrel, dealing blows, no matter how or where they fall.

At the commencement of such struggles, the first movers

never act in the way which those who reflect on their movements might suppose best calculated to enable them to redress their wrongs. They proceed from one false step to another, till their cause is brought to the brink of ruin.

If that cause were just, it is at such a juncture that a wise man, who loved his country and compassionated the people, were he called upon to take a part in their struggle, would deem it his duty to put these questions to himself:—

1. Have the wrongs that are complained of, and the dangers which menace the community, reached that point, when to leave the people without guidance, is to leave them to destruction ?

2. Are the people in rebellion, or about to engage in it, embarked in a good and righteous cause ?

3. Are they likely to succeed ?

4. Are they sure to be bettered by success ?

5. Have they risen in defence, not only of civil rights and material interests, but of the highest interests of all, those of religion, outraged to the last degree of impiety or intolerance ?

6. Have their discontents arisen from the temporary or the permanent pressure of physical sufferings ?

7. Have they overrated the value of the rights or privileges they are seeking to obtain ?

8. Have they been misled by ambitious and designing men, or been goaded into rebellion by tyrants for their own wicked ends ?

9. Can their wrongs be redressed without resistance ?

10. Who is to decide for the people when resistance is allowable or likely to be successful ?

11. At what period of oppression does the law of nature justify resistance to the laws of man ?

12. In the Divine law, what sanction is there to be found for resistance to constituted authority ?

These are questions it would behove a conscientious man to put to himself, and to have answered satisfactorily, before he stirred in the cause of a revolted people. These are questions that could not be seriously asked and truthfully replied to without leading to the conclusion that the results of revolutions have seldom realized the expectations that have been formed of benefits to be obtained by civil war, and without bringing the inquirer to Cicero's opinion on this subject, "Iniquissimam pacem, justissimo bello antifero".

The grand question, in which all the preceding queries are involved, is one which, on political grounds alone, can never be argued with advantage to rulers or the ruled.

The "appeal to Heaven", as recourse to the sword has been impiously termed, has been too often made without a due consideration of the importance of the foregoing inquiries, before those who decided on questions which thus

involved the interests of an entire people adopted such an alternative. Sir James Macintosh has well observed: "Though the solution of this tremendous problem requires the calmest exercise of reason, the circumstances which bring it forward commonly call forth mightier agents, which disturb and overpower the understanding.

"In conjunctures so awful, when men feel more than they reason, their conduct is chiefly governed by the boldness or the weakness of their nature, by their love of liberty or their attachment to quiet, by their proneness or slowness to fellow-feeling with their countrymen".

He tells us, "in such a conflict there is little quiet left for moral deliberation. Yet, by the immutable principles of morality, and by them alone, must the historian try the conduct of all men, before he allows himself to consider all the circumstances of time, place, opinion, principle, example, temptation, and obstacle, which, though they never authorize a removal of the everlasting landmarks of right and wrong, ought to be well weighed in allotting a due degree of commendation or censure to human actions".*

A conversation between Moore and Lord John Russell, respecting the difficulties of treating of the times and men of 1798, deserves attention.

"In the course of our conversation", says Moore, in his Diary, June, 20, 1831, "in speaking of the danger of such a work, in the present excited state of the public mind, I said: 'Why, the subject has become historical; and I don't see why it should be more dangerous than your own "Life of Lord Wm. Russell" would be, if published just now'. To this Lord John answered (but too truly), in his little quiet way: 'Ah, that's a quarrel that has long since been made up: not so with the Irish question'".†

This argument would better serve to support the policy of making up the quarrel, than to prove the expediency of suppressing the history of it. If sixty years did not give an historical character to the subject of a rebellion, the addition to that period of a century, if all due governmental means were not taken "to make up the quarrel", would not answer the purpose of divesting that subject of a political aspect.

Bacon was of opinion that "it greatly concerned the shepherds of people to know the prognostics of state tempests"‡ But now it seems to be considered a sort of political "bienseance", to reprobate the act of referring to this history of the rebellion of 1798, as a renewal of painful recollections, which ought not to be recalled. The desire to bury in oblivion the wrongs of the injured, is one of those

* "History of the Revolution of 1688". † "Moore's Memoirs", vol. vi., p. 298. ‡ "Bacon's Essays", ed. 1742, vol. i., p. 77.

benevolent recommendations whose cheap charity is intended to cover a multitude of sins against humanity and justice. The recommendation, however, evinces a more tender regard for the character of evil-doers, than any feeling of regret for the ills that have been inflicted or endured. So long as the persons who hold this language are not called upon to look upon the sufferings of a maltreated people, or that the outrages committed on the latter are not done at their own door, the danger of the repetition of such evils is of little moment, compared with the injury done by the publication of them to the character of an expiring faction whose interests they had formerly espoused, or compared with the expense of sensibility which a knowledge of those evils might occasion.

They have no objection to the history of the wrongs of the people of any other portion of the globe, but there is something sacred in atrocities perpetrated in Ireland. They are regarded by such persons with a feeling it is not easy to define, wherein pride and prejudice predominate, combined with a vague recollection of the oppressors having been originally of their own land and lineage, and with a disposition to recognize the justice of the old plea for plunder and oppression, namely, the barbarity of the spoiled and the enslaved.

It would seem as if such persons thought that the laws of God and man might be outraged with impunity, if a decent covering was only thrown over the naked enormities; and once they had been shrouded by those who had perpetrated them, that it was an act of indecorum to lift the pall.

There is a mawkish sensibility very prevalent in this country, which resembles a good deal the intense selfishness of Goethe in his latter years, who never suffered his friends, or his domestics, to speak in the presence of himself or his family, of any calamity that might have happened in his immediate neighbourhood. He could pour forth tears, or cause those of others to flow, over romantic sorrows, but he had none to shed for the real miseries of life around him; and, rather than pain his feelings, he, in his old age, deprived himself of the opportunity of administering relief to the unfortunate.

This feeling of reluctance to be incommoded by the disclosure of sufferings, which do not fall under personal or immediate observation, influences the conduct of a very large class of persons when they hear of the wrongs that have been inflicted on our people. They shrug their shoulders at the recital, and wonder why the Irish have not been at peace, have never ceased to make an outcry of their wrongs, and to wrangle among themselves !

The fact is, though Orangeism in England is not in repute, and its Irish orgies, like the Eleusinian mysteries, are a

little too incomprehensible at times to be objects of unmixed admiration, there is no mistake, in respect to the repugnance that unfortunately is felt to any statement of the wrongs of the Irish people, which have existed. It is not because there is any peculiar affection for the Sirrs, the Sandys, the Swans, the Beresfords, the Castlereaghs, or Reynolds, but that a mortal prejudice has existed against the Irish people.

It requires in France all the genius of Mignet and Thiers to consecrate the doctrine of fatalism, as applied to the consideration of terrible events, and of atrocities on a grand scale, like those of the French Revolution. Whe have the doctrine in our own country; but we have only the pitiful talents of a Musgrave, or persons of his school connected with the Orange press in England, to transform political atrocities into political beatitudes. With them the end always sanctifies the means; "ils ne vous disent pas—admirez Marat, mais admirez ses œuvrs: le meurtrier n'est pas beau, c'est le meurtre qui est divin".*

But some of them do contend that not only the murderous acts are useful, but the Marats of our country are men to be admired and rewarded as a matter of course. This goes far beyond the system of Thiers. "According to his doctrine", says Chateaubriand, "it is necessary that the historian should recount the greatest atrocities without indignation, and speak of the highest virtues without love: that with a frozen glance he should regard society as submitted to certain irresistible laws, so that each event should take place as it must inevitably happen".

Those, however, who think, with Chateaubriand, that an act of cruelty can never be useful, or one of injustice never necessary—who bear in mind that the remembrance of a single iniquitous condemnation, that of Socrates, "has traversed twenty centuries, to stigmatize his judges and executioners"—are not likely to adopt this system, or to deem it advisable, if practicable, for those who have to recount great acts of barbarity, to divest themselves of all that is humane in their feelings, and retain only their powers of perception and examination, to find in every massacre, or extensive violation of justice, something that may turn to the account of our political opinions. Hardly any motive could induce a man, who was not an atheist or the hireling of a faction, to wade through the iniquities of 1798, and to give a faithful account of the events or the actors in the scenes of that dark period, except the hatred of oppression, injustice, and inhumanity.

That motive, I avow, induced me to take up this subject. The circumstances in which I have been placed, in connection

* "Etudes Historiques", par le Vicomte de Chateaubriand, p. 277.

with the efforts that have been made for the suppression of slavery and the slave trade, during many years past, were not calculated to make a man a bad hater of oppression in any country. In fact, the struggle against slavery, whether in the West Indies or on the shores of Africa, served, in my case as an apprenticeship to the cause of general freedom, and tended to make contrasts between personal and political slavery familiar to me. I could not understand that sort of philanthropy which was to be permitted to battle only for the interests of humanity and justice when they were outraged in the persons of black men, and to make the world ring with the echoes of the cart-whip and the cries of the slaves who were four thousand miles off; to have one set of nerves exquisitely sensitive to the sufferings of men who were victims to the cupidity of West India planters, and another, callous and insensible to the wrongs of those who were persecuted at home. Whether African negroes were held " guilty of a skin not coloured like our own", or the "mere Irishry" were deemed culpable of a creed not conformed to the fashion of their provincial bashaws, the same spirit of injustice in either case prevailed; and to pretend to sympathize alone with the victims who happened to be natives of Africa or descendents of Africans, it seemed to me, would be a spurious kind of benevolence. The cruelties inflicted on the Indians of the new world were reprobated by mankind, their authors were stigmatized by our historians as men of barbarous and sanguinary disposition. The cruelties perpetrated on the people of Ireland in 1798 were chiefly the results of the iniquitous measures of which Lords Camden, Clare, and Castlereagh, were the authors or advisers, and for the guilt of which these noble lords must ever be considered responsible, but not chiefly culpable. The great culprit was the British minister, William Pitt, whose policy required such atrocities for its accomplishment. A licentious soldiery and an infuriated faction were let loose on the country. The free quarter system, and the general practice of scourging people, for the purpose of extorting confessions of criminality, were carried into effect with the full knowledge, the silent sanction, and virtual approval of those agents of his in the Irish government.

For their memories it might be wished that Ireland had no history, but for their country it is not to be desired that the story of her wrongs should be consigned to oblivion.

And I might ask how was that history to be told, and to leave the public conduct of the Clares, the Castlereaghs, and Cooks, uncensured ?

Were the subordinate agents of the government.—the spies and the informers, the terrorists and the lictors of that day—the O'Briens, and the Reynolds, the Beresfords, and

the Sirrs, Sandys, and Swans, the men who "measured their consequence by the coffins of their victims", and estimated their services by the injuries they inflicted on the people,—were they alone, the official insects of the hour, to be preserved in the amber of the eloquent invective of a Curran or a Grattan, while the acts of their exalted employers and abettors were to be sponged out of our memories, and the tablet over-written with reminiscences of their rank, and the better qualities which in private life they might have exhibited ?

In modern times the cruelties committed by slave dealers on the coast of Africa caused even the introduction into our official vocabulary of such epithets as "miscreants", "monsters", "enemies to the human race", etc., etc.; for with such epithets we find the parliamentary slave trade papers teem. The tortures, however, inflicted in Ireland on human beings who were more immediately entitled to British sympathy, because they were more within reach of its protection, in point of national consanguinity who were more of its own flesh, and in respect to religious relationship, bound to it in stricter bonds of Christian fellowship, deserved, in my humble opinion, to be placed in the same category of crimes as those in which are recorded the atrocities of the Spaniards and Portuguese, and to be ranked among the worst outrages on humanity that have ever been committed. We are fully as subject as the people of any other country on the face of the Earth to the fitful influence of that variable atmosphere of the feelings, which modifies our notions of the obligations of benevolence, and carries a spirit of conventional Christianity into our dealings with the wrongs and grievances which are brought before us, which at one period and for one class of sufferers enlivens sensibility, and at another time and for another description of unfortunates stifles every emotion of compassion.

The nature of oppression is surely the same wherever it is practised, whether the violaters of human rights be Spaniards, Portuguese, or members of any portion of the British empire; whether they lived in a bygone age, or within our own remembrance; in whatever language their acts are execrated; whether their infamy is connected with the names of the "Conquistadores" of the new world, and the slave-dealing ravagers of a large portion of the old, or with those of the abettors of torture and cruelty in a country which was governed by British laws, or with the names of Lords Clare and Castlereagh in one of the darkest pages of the history of British rule in Ireland.

I am well aware that it would not only be conformable to Christian charity, but most highly conducive to human happiness, were we to bear in mind the infirmities of our nature in all our dealings with the faults, and even the

crimes, of our fellow-men, and, to use the words of a very wise man (Sir James Stephen), if we were to consider that, "after all, the men we depreciate are our kinsmen", instead of crucifying their misdeeds, if we occupied our thoughts with thankful emotions that we had been placed in happier circumstances than those persons had been surrounded by, and that we had not been subjected to the same temptations, by the possession of power, without limits to its exercise, and of interests that were incompatible with the natural rights or civil privileges of other men.

The only good that can arise from the history of such times as those of 1798, and from preserving the remembrance of the enormities committed in them, is the prevention of similar evils, by pointing out the inevitable result of them in the long run, the calamities which overtake the perpetrators of cruel and barbarous acts, the retributive justice, slow but sure, which, sooner or later, visits every signal violation of humanity with its proper punishment.

I fully admit, in aiming at similar objects, charity oftentimes is grievously offended, and by those who treat of such times, the prominent actor in each scene is too often looked upon as "a hero or a fiend".

Men forget, in treating of those whose deeds they condemn, that the actors are "their own kinsmen", and, when speaking of them with ignominy and contempt, to use the words of Isaiah, that "they despise their own flesh".

Amongst the papers of the United Irishmen which have fallen into my hands, in a letter addressed to one of them by Sir J. Egerton Brydges, I find the following passage, speaking of the obligations which those who love letters, owe to the characters of the votaries of learning:—

"To me, literature has always appeared one of the very few unchanging and inexhaustible balms of life, and if we love literature, it seems to me very strange not to feel a warm benevolence towards its professors".

It would be well if literary men felt that this obligation of benevolence applies not only to one class, but to all persons whose deeds they have to deal with; but it is one thing to feel that it is thus applicable, and another to carry the conviction into practical effect.

I have endeavoured to place the characters and the acts of the men who are the subjects of the various memoirs in these volumes in their true light before the public, most of whom, in their private characters, had been grievously traduced and vilified by the malignant press which is at the command of Orangeism in both countries, and, by a faithful exhibition of the crimes and calamities of civil war, to contribute (as far as it was in my power to effect this object) to prevent the entertainment of a thought, unaccompanied

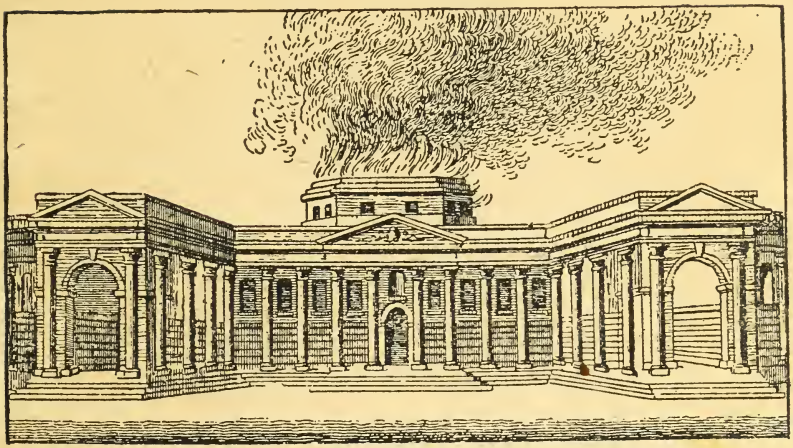
with horror, of a recurrence to the evils which it has been my painful task to record.

In the performance of this undertaking I would beg leave to observe, if I have not brought abilities to the task worthy of its character, perhaps the humble merit may be accorded to my efforts of having devoted to this work a vast amount of labour in the collection of the materials and the verification of disputed facts. There is little danger, perhaps, of an exaggerated opinion being formed of the extent to which that labour has been carried. I commenced this work in 1836, with the determination of bringing the subjects of it fully before the people of England, to get a hearing from them for the history of the men engaged in the insurrection of 1798. That determination was based on the conviction that the people of England, in common fairness, were bound to hear what those men had to attempt to say in their own defence, or those most closely connected with them, who considered themselves charged with the protection of their memories; inasmuch as their character, conduct, and proceedings had heretofore only been made known to them by their mortal enemies.

In dealing with the authors of those many acts of injustice and inhumanity it has been necessary to refer to in this work, though I am fully aware of the error of considering the conduct of such individuals too much apart from the circumstances by which their passions were engaged, their proceedings entrained, and their interests arrayed against the better feelings of their nature, there is another error which, in common with many writers on the subject of the insurrection of 1798, I am conscious of having been betrayed into, not less to be reproved, namely, that of devoting too much attention to the subordinate agents of the government, to the reprobation of the miscreants by whom the various tortures of scourging, picketing, pitch-capping, and half-hanging were inflicted, or the wretches of that train of stipendiary informers, best known by the appellation of "the battalion of testimony". drilled, dieted, and dressed up for production on the trials of persons charged with offences against the state, as reputable witnesses, by the Verres of his day, the redoubted Major Sirr, and his compeers.

Too much notice has been taken of the vices of those menials of the government of that day, for "servants must their masters' minds fulfil"; and a great deal too much impunity has been accorded to the crimes of the prime minister, who tolerated and countenanced, or left unpunished, their atrocious acts; for ministers must know it is their misfortune, as

"It is the curse of kings to be attended
By slaves that take their humour for a warrant
To break within the bloody house of life,
And, on the winking of authority,
To understand a law".



THE PARLIAMENT HOUSE, DUBLIN.

(Showing the appearance of the building during the fire on February 27th, 1792).

The conduct of the men whose lives and actions are the subject of this work, it would be absurd to consider apart grand question for consideration is, whether the system of from the nature of the government under which they lived. In forming any opinion of their conduct in relation to it, the corruption, rapacity, terror, and injustice under which Ireland was ruled at the period in question, deserved the name of government, or had totally departed from all those original principles and intentions on which it claimed to be founded, and with which it was presumed to be endowed for the public good.

The aim and end of the government of Ireland in 1798 was to perpetuate oppression, and break down the national spirit and national independence that menaced its existence; to make the people servile and powerless, and to keep them so, by fomenting religious dissensions; to promote the interests of a miserable minority, while affecting to ignore the sordid views that were covered, but not concealed, by the veil of a holy zeal for religious interests; to bestow all its honours, patronage, and protection on that small section of the community which my Lord Stanley, in one of his fitful moods, was pleased to call "the remnant of an expiring

faction". Against this government the society of United Irishmen reared its head and raised its hand, and failed in a daring struggle with its power. Whether it deserved success, or took the best means to insure it, are questions which the perusal of these volumes may enable the reader to determine. As far as my own experience goes, and it has not been confined to very narrow local limits, the results I have witnessed in various countries of recourse to violent measures, in the resistance of oppression, even where they have been momentarily successful, would lead me to look for surer grounds of hope for liberty, and a better lot for the great body of the people in any country, in the abstinence from physical force proceedings, and the employment only of moral means for the purpose of defeating the wicked objects of a bad government. That experience would not lead me to think lightly of the evils of civil war, nor to indulge very flattering hopes of any lasting benefits accruing from it, nor to build in the air "chateaux d'Espagne", nor utopian theories, based on notions of the perfectibility of human beings. The day dream of young philosophy does not long outlast that sort of practical knowledge of the realities of revolts and revolutions. However great might be the success or extensive the changes effected by them, the disorders of society and the miseries of mankind, it still might be feared, would have to be encountered and endured, and traces and fragments of the wreck of man's original intelligence, it might be expected, would continue to the end of time to obstruct and to impede the best designs for the advancement of human happiness.

Is there no resource left after all but the sword to remedy the evils of bad government? Are there no means but those of violence to resolve or to repair the bond of union? There is, at all events, an overruling mind that watches over the destinies of nations, that regulates the movements which determine the rise and fall of empires,—a compensating power that adjusts the balance in all political contingencies, that ultimately restores the equilibrium, or at least lessens the weight of preponderating evil!

All experience tends to show us that the day of reckoning for a people's wrongs, come it slow or come it fast, is sure to arrive; and we have only to turn our eyes to the events that are passing in countries that once almost vied in prosperity and colonial greatness with our own, to see that, the measure of the iniquity of their governments having been filled up, the hand of Divine retribution has been laid heavily upon them.

Who can reflect on the calamities that have fallen on Spain and Portugal—on the loss of the immense possessions of the former, the succession of revolutions that has followed the ordinary course of government, as it were in

the natural order of cause and effect, for the last five-and-twenty years; can look on religion trampled under foot, its temples pillaged, its ministers despised and spoiled; party after party succeeding each other; one military despotism treading on the heels of another, proscription and decimation the rule of each, the people plundered by all—without feeling that the heavy hand of Divine retribution has been laid upon that land in punishment of its terrible violations of humanity and justice in the New World ? Who, without this conviction, can consider the condition of the adjoining kingdom of Portugal, its past, its present visitations, the destruction of its power, the vain result of all its discoveries and conquests in both hemispheres; its chivalry broken in Africa, the most warlike of its kings slain in battle with barbarians, the most powerful of its armies routed by them, and so signally defeated as never again to be restored to former strength; its valuable possessions in America, in Africa, and India, wrested from its enfeebled grasp; the visitation of awful calamities on its proudest cities, thousands of whose citizens, and the guilty gains of their nefarious traffic, have been swallowed up, or consumed, or swept away in a few hours, in the course of which, earthquake, conflagration, and inundation have combined their terrors; and in one memorable instance, at the very hour in which the churches of a great city were crowded with inhabitants, and on the very day when the celebration of a particular festival caused the people to congregate in them, laid two-thirds of a large metropolis in ruin. Who can contemplate the consequent scourges of pestilence and famine, and the crowning calamity of this frightful series of unfortunate events, the establishment of the despotism of the ruthless, tyrannical, and sanguinary Pombal, and not feel that the crimes of Portugal and its rulers against humanity had "pierced the clouds" ? Its present condition, its pride, its poverty—its revenue dwindled away, its expenditure augmented—a history that is a continuous record of wars of succession, engendered by the folly and unnatural dissensions of its sovereigns and their sons, a military government, a ministry chosen and changed by means of revolutions, a foreign debt of nine millions to the money-lenders of Great Britain, a plundered church, a venal magistracy, a sordid, repacious "bureaucracy", a wrecked nobility, and poverty everywhere staring people in the face—who can ponder on circumstances such as these, and not feel that God has a controversy with the people and the rulers of the land ?

Other nations would do well to profit by the examples of Divine retribution which those countries afford. The laws of humanity and justice are not outraged with impunity; the wrongs of nations are never suffered to pass unpunished,

and the cry of the oppressed will be heard, whether of the poor in the ill-ruled land, borne down by rapacious proprietary power, or of the multitude driven to madness by state oppression. The due time of retribution, and the fitting instruments of it, are known only to Him to whom the vindication of those laws belongs.

The force of public opinion, constituted as it now is, exercises a mighty influence over oppression, by bringing it into perplexity, disrepute, and disability for evil, and serves as the palladium of downcast liberty, to enable it, when it has been beaten down for a time, to rise up under its shelter, to renew a bloodless fight with tyranny, and in every change of circumstances and of fortune, in the conflict with corruption, avarice, or despotism, still to enable it to linger on the field, and take advantage of the public enemy at every opening in its mail. There are times, however, when public opinion has no such power and no such field for its legitimate warfare—when it has no such weapons to oppose to tyranny, and the times of which this work treats were peculiarly of that description.

But even in the worst of times and in the most despotic countries, Providence seems to direct the career of a small mass of virtue and intelligence that tyranny cannot subdue, that mammon cannot corrupt, nor prevailing folly, ignorance, nor debasement discourage nor obstruct; that under good report and bad report pursues the even tenor of its way, and, unsuspected and unnoticed, undermines the fastnesses of despotism, working onward like the worm in the book, that pierces every day page after page, till at length it makes its way through all its substance.

I have noticed, even in countries where despotism is supposed to be all-powerful, an undercurrent of political literature that flows smoothly and silently, and wends its way through the land without attracting much observation, till it becomes a broad stream at length, on which the barque of freedom and enlightenment is borne bravely onward.

And in the execution of this arduous undertaking, which, at times, I have felt as if it never would be accomplished, and at others, as if it had been better for me and mine that it had never been commenced, it only remains for me to express my gratitude to those persons by whom I have been assisted with information, and entrusted with valuable documents, and have thus been enabled to bring my work to a successful termination, and in an especial manner to persons diametrically opposed to me in religious as well as political opinions—to English people in particular, given to literature, or engaged in periodical publications.

I would also beg to acknowledge the obligations which I owe to a noble English lord, whose name, in early life, was connected with the names of the great and good men of a

former and more brilliant era in English parliamentary history, who were friends to Ireland and its people. To Lord Brougham I am indebted for an introduction to the first living French historian, wherein his lordship called on that distinguished person to facilitate, by every means in his power, the object I had in view—the elucidation of an important period of Irish history—by obtaining access for me to documents connected with it, that exist in certain public offices in Paris.

I make this acknowledgment with pleasure and with gratitude to his lordship. I put forward no pretensions to the merit of having done the full justice to my subject that it required. I am quite sensible how much the work falls short of its requirements; but I am conscious of having done more than has been hitherto effected towards collecting materials that will serve for a faithful history of a very memorable period in the annals of British imperial rule, and a record of some of the most remarkable men that Ireland ever produced. The result of those labours has been to bring together a mass of information, which, but for such efforts, must, to a great extent, have perished with individuals, who were actors in the struggle of 1798, over a great many of whom the grave has closed since my researches were commenced.

I will conclude with a brief repetition of my objects in writing this work:—To do justice to the dead, and a service to the living, by deterring rulers who would be tyrants from pursuing the policy of 1798, and men of extravagant or lightly-weighed opinions from ill-considered projects against oppression, whose driftless efforts against potent despotism never fail to give new strength to the latter: to exhibit the evils of bad government; the mischievous agency of spies, informers, stipendiary swearers, and fanatical adherents; the foul crime of exasperating popular feeling, or exaggerating the sense of public wrongs; to make the wickedness fully known of fomenting rebellion for state purposes, and then employing savage and inhuman means to defeat it; to convince the people, moreover, of the folly of entering into secret associations with the idea of keeping plans against oppression unknown through the instrumentality of oaths and tests; by showing the manifold dangers, in such times, to which integrity and innocence are exposed from temptations of all kinds to treachery; and, lastly, by directing attention to the great fact of modern times—the power of breaking down bad government when there is a stage for public opinion, a virtuous people, and earnest leaders, resolutely honest, by peaceful means, and by resistance of a passive kind to all the illegalities and acts of violence of any administration that departs from the pur-

pose for which it was created— namely, for the distribution of justice, equal and impartial, to all classes of the community.

The people, under such circumstances, have other and better means of protection than those which involve great sufferings and uncertain issues. The redress they seek is to be obtained by a peaceful struggle with oppression, legitimate in its nature, and, if defeated for a time, not necessarily fatal in its consequences to the cause of freedom. They must make no offensive wars, and, if they who represent them undertake, with their consent, to pay for wars made on them, or on other countries, unjustly, they deserve to live and die under the dominion of "sword law". In the time of the second Richard the question with the ruling powers was—" How shall we do for money for these wars?"

There was then virtually no constitutional voice to answer that demand, nor, indeed, at a much later period. In our time the people are held to have a voice in the great inquest of the nation. They must teach their representatives to return a decisive answer to all applications for the means of waging wars which are unjust and unnecessary to them. "The nation's money can be only given to government in order to enable it to protect and benefit the people; for the glory of the empire and the true greatness of the sovereign, is comprised in one object, which should be the aim and end of all good governments—namely, the grand design of making the people happy". I take it for granted either that the people are represented, or have a right to be so. But if they are not, they must be represented, unless they should be unworthy of freedom, or unable to make their just demands. to be heard by their rulers with due attention. One object more I have had in view—to expose and prevent a recurrence to a system or government carried on by means of dissensions, rancours, and divisions, industriously fomented, by religious animosities made subservient to a policy that might be supposed to prevail only in a heathen land. That policy I have endeavoured to expose the results of in these volumes. It prevailed for centuries before Tone was born, and was in being when this mournful epitome of Irish history was written.

"God made the land; and all His works are good:
Man made the laws; and all they breath'd was blood.
Unhallowed annals of six hundred years!
A code of blood, a history of tears".

CHAPTER IX.

Origin, Organization, and Negotiations of the United Irishmen.

It is not only epidemic diseases which, under peculiar circumstances, assume a contagious character, but epidemic influences of a moral nature, widely disseminated, which at certain periods acquire a particular degree of activity, when all opinions that are brought into contact with them become infected by the same virus, and the result is, a predominant impulse to think, act, and move in one common direction.

This is the rationale, in fact, of all great impulsive movements of a popular kind, when masses of people combine simultaneously and conspire in several places at the same time, for a special object, no matter how indefinite and impracticable it may be, or of what magnitude—for a religious crusade, an exodus, a revolt, or a reform.

The contagion of the American revolt was productive in Ireland of that sturdy spirit of nationality and love of independence which called into existence the Volunteer Association.

The contagion of the French Revolution of 1789, communicated those influences to Irish politics which eventuated in the formation of the Society of United Irishmen.

Early in the month of October, 1791, some of the Catholic leaders attempted to form a society "instituted for the purpose of promoting unanimity amongst Irishmen, and removing religious prejudices". This society was projected previously to the formation of the Society of United Irishmen. The attempt was not successful, but the idea was caught at, and embodied in the formation of a society in Belfast called the Society of United Irishmen. The declaration of the former society, though very remarkable and worthy of notice, is not alluded to by Tone.

Declaration of the Society instituted for the purpose of promoting unanimity amongst Irishmen, and removing Religious Prejudices.

"In the present enlighted and improving period of society, it is not for the Irish Roman Catholics alone to continue silent. Not accused of any crime, not conscious of any delinquency, they suffer a privation of rights and conveniences, the penalty reserved in wise states for offences of atrocious magnitude. It does not become them, whilst, with liberality ever to be gratefully remembered, many descriptions of

their fellow-citizens compassionate their situation, to seem indifferent to the desirable and, they hope, not distant event of their emancipation. They wish to ascertain upon what terms they may venture to settle in a country which they love with the rational preference of men, not the simplicity of puerile acquiescence. It is not for the Irish Catholics, armed as their cause is with reason and justice, like public foes to seek advantage from public calamity. They ought to advance their claim at a time most favourable to discussion, when the condition of the empire is flourishing and tranquil. They might seem culpable to their country, if, affecting to dissemble what it were unmanly not to feel, they reserved their pretensions in ambuscade to augment the perplexities of some critical emergency. They should be culpable to posterity, if they omitted to profit by the general inclination of public sentiment. They should be culpable to themselves, if they suffered an imputation to subsist, that in the extent of the British territory, they alone submit without repining to a mortifying and oppressive bondage, degrading to themselves and pernicious to their country. They conceive that in the present state of things their silence might be received as evidence of such dispositions.

"Influenced by these considerations, and instructed by a recent transaction that, although laws may be shameful and preposterous, there is no security that they shall not be enforced—for even in a philosophic age there will be bigots and tyrants where the votaries of freedom are most sanguine—a number of Roman Catholics resident in Dublin have formed themselves into a society, which they invite their fellow-sufferers throughout the nation to unite with, which shall have for its object to consider and individually to support with all their zeal and personal influence, such measures, not inconsistent with their duty to the civil magistrate, as shall appear likely to relieve them from the oppressions and disqualifications imposed in this country on persons professing the Roman Catholic religion. We therefore do unanimously resolve—

"That we will, to the utmost of our power, endeavour, by all legal and constitutional means, to procure the repeal of the laws by which we are aggrieved as Roman Catholics. That we will promote repeated applications to every branch of the legislature for that purpose, and assist such applications by all means of legal influence which it shall at any time be possible for us to exert.

"It would be tedious, it might prove disgusting, to recount each individual grievance under which we suffer. The Roman Catholics seem preserved in this land but as a source of revenue. The whole legislative, the whole executive, the whole judical power of the state is in the hands of men over

whom they have no control, and with whom they can have little intercourse. They are prohibited to engage in any mode of industry from which it is possible to debar them or which is worth the monopoly. They are restricted in the education of their children. As conscientious men, we cannot lightly abandon our religion; as prudent men, we hesitate to engage in controversial study: the wisest have been bewildered in such pursuits, and they are for the most part incompatible with our necessary occupations. Nor is there any moral advantage held out as an inducement to change our creed. It is not pretended that we should become better men or more dutiful subjects, but merely experimentalists in religion seek to gratify their caprice by forcing us from our habits of education into the perplexing labyrinth of theology.

"The liberty of Ireland to those of our communion is a calamity, and their misfortunes seem likely to increase as the country shall improve in prosperity and freedom. They may look with envy to the subjects of an arbitrary monarch, and contrast that government, in which one great tyrant ravages the land, with the thousand inferior despots whom at every instant they must encounter. They have the bustle and cumbersome forms without the advantages of liberty. The octennial period, at which the delegated trust of legislation is revoked, and his importance restored to the constituent, returns but to disturb their tranquillity and revive the recollection of their debasement. All the activity, all the popular arts of electioneering canvass, enforce the idea of their insignificance; they exemplify it too. Witness the various preferences given by persons of rank to not always the most deserving among our Protestant countrymen—a preference nearly as detrimental to the independent Protestants as to us.

"There exists not on their behalf any control over power. They have felt the truth of this assertion when, in this age of toleration, even within the last eight years, several new penal statutes have been enacted against them. They experience it daily, not alone in the great deliberations of the nation, but in the little concerns of minute districts; not alone in the levy of public money for the service of the state, but in the local imposition of county and parochial taxes. We appeal to our rulers, we appeal to Ireland, we appeal to Europe, if we deserve a place in society, should we seem willing to insinuate that such a situation is not severely unacceptable!

"We are satisfied that the mere repeal of the laws against us will prove but feebly beneficial, unless the act be sanctioned by the concurrence of our Protestant brethren, and those jealousies removed by which the social intercourse of private life is interrupted. It is time we should cease

to be distinct nations forcibly enclosed within the limits of one island. It shall be a capital object of our institution to encourage the spirit of harmony and sentiments of affection which the ties of common interest and common country ought, ere now, to have inspired. Countrymen, too long have we suffered ourselves to be opposed in rival factions to each other, the sport of those who felt no tenderness for either. Why should a diversity of sentiment, so usual where the matter in debate is abstruse or important, separate those whom Heaven placed together for mutual benefit and consolation? Objects material in their day produced hostility between our ancestors. The causes of that discord have ceased to exist; let the enmity too perish. Let it be the duty of the present and of future ages to prevent the recurrence of such unnatural and calamitous dissension; except in the actual discharge of the religious duties which conscience renders inevitable, we wish there never shall be found a trace of difference which may possibly divide us into distinct communities.

"The ill effects of those restrictions are not confined to those of our religion; they extend to every individual and every public body in the nation; under the weight of them industry is depressed; under their influence public spirit is enervated. It is the interest of every man in Ireland that the entire code should be abolished; it is the interest of the crown, as it must promote the general happiness of the subjects; it is the interest of the great, as it will serve to tranquillize the country and to encourage industry; it is the additional interest of the middle and inferior ranks, as it must impart new importance to their sentiments, and to the expression of them. We call upon every order in the state, not alone by their benevolence and justice, but by their patriotism and self-interest, to co-operate with our exertions.

It adds the insult of mockery to the misfortune of the Irish Catholics, that the number of persons aggrieved, which in every other instance is an inducement to redress, is a reason alleged to procrastinate their relief, and an argument used to impose silence on their murmurs. Is it their act that a multitude of Irishmen are aggregated by common grievance, and classed in one great community of fellow-sufferers? Why accuse them of hostility to the constitution? They earnestly solicit to participate in its advantages. Why suspect them of enmity to their country? They desire to contract with it closer ties, which shall decide them to consign their posterity irrevocably to its bosom. We envy not its endowments to the Established Church; adversity has instructed us that all the consolations which our religion promises are most faithfully and tenderly administered by pastors with moderate appointments, a

free gift of gratitude to the kindest benefactors. Fastidiously excluded from the constitution, we can pronounce on it but as aliens by speculation. We discern in it the means of much happiness; we regret that its symmetry is not complete; a chasm remains, which might be filled with advantage by the Roman Catholics; we have neither passion nor interest at variance with the order of things it professes to establish. We desire only that property in our hands may have its natural weight, and merit in our children its rational encouragement. We have sworn allegiance to our sovereign, and the very evils we complain of prove how inviolable is our attachment to such obligations. We respect the peerage, the ornament of the state and the bulwark of the people; interposing, as we hope the Irish Catholics will experience, mediatory good offices between authority and the objects of it. We solicit a share of interest in the existence of the Commons. Do you require an additional test? We offer one more unequivocal than a volume of abjurations —we hope to be free, and will endeavour to be united. Do you require new proofs of our sincerity? We stood by you in the exigencies of our country. We extend our hands, the pledge of cordiality. Who is he that calls himself a friend to Ireland, and will refuse us?

"If the applications on behalf of the Irish Catholics are complied with, they can never have an occasion—if rejected, they cannot have an interest—to interrupt the public harmony. Engaged, for the most part, in the various departments of commerce, they are concerned, not less than any other class of citizens, to cultivate the blessings of tranquillity: individually, we have more at stake than some who presume to falsify our motives and calumniate our actions. The Roman Catholic body measured strength with the power of the state, and was vanquished, when it possessed a force that never more can be exerted, and was opposed to enemies far less numerous than now it should encounter. The confiscations of that period are confirmed to the present occupiers by immemorial possession, by the utter impossibility of ascertaining the original proprietors, by the personal and pecuniary interest of almost every Roman Catholic in the land to maintain the settlement. Many of our communion already have, and still more are likely to embark their property on titles derived under those forfeitures. It is not from the wealthy, attached to their present enjoyment, that commotion is to be apprehended: it is not from the industrious; a single year of anarchy must prove fatal to their competence: it is not from the poor, a wretched band of slaves, mouldering under these bad laws, and only made use of to degrade the Irish Catholics to a rabble, when it is convenient to despise them. We are willing to forget that any besides the present race ever existed

on this Island. We long have been willing to forget it, if our recollection were not kept alive by what we suffer, and by the celebration of festivals, memorable only as they denote the era and the events from whence we date our bondage.

"We will endeavour by temperate but unremitting assiduity to procure the benefit of that constitution which, of all our fellow-subjects, is denied alone to those of our persuasion. We are amenable to all the decrees of the state, we contribute to all its exigencies; we are still to be informed upon what grounds its advantages are made a monopoly to our exclusion. We challenge an investigation of our principles and conduct; we feel not in ourselves, we know not that there is in our brethren, a deficiency of manly spirit, of capacity, or virtue, which ought to assign to the Irish Roman Catholic an inferior rank among the creatures of our Common Father. If we have a crime, it is to have slept over our chains; our cause is the cause of justice and our country. We solicit counsel and assistance from all to whom these sacred names do not present themselves unheeded.

"To the patronage of the lettered we peculiarly recommend ourselves; where talents have arisen amongst us, they have been compelled to seek refuge in a foreign country, or they have perished in their infancy, robbed of the hope that animates, curtailed of the education that invigorates them. We claim as of right the benefit of open trial and candid discussion; when overpowered by the administration of an extensive empire, the British Senate did not refuse its attention to the unfortunate exiles of Africa. If in this enlightened age it is still our doom to suffer, we submit; but at least, let us learn what imputation of crimes can instigate, or what motives of expediency can account for, the denunciation of that heavy judgment. If loyalty, which strong temptations could never alienate; if exemplary good conduct under the most trying circumstances; if reverence to a constitution, which in our native land we are forbidden to approach, be insufficient to remove unjust aspersions, and entitle us to the kindness and confidence of our brethren, we may be at least instructed how we should atone for what we cannot deem inexpiable—the political errors or misfortunes of our ancestors".

The Society of the United Irishmen was formed in Belfast in the month of October, 1791, by Theobald Wolfe Tone, a young barrister of remarkable talent, then in his twenty-eight year. A political club, composed of the liberal volunteers of that city, under the guidance of a secret committee, had been previously in existence, the leading members of which club were Neilson, Russell, Simms, Sinclair, M'Tier, M'Cabe, Digges, Bryson, Jordan, etc. Tone, in his Diary, says, he went down to Belfast on the 11th of October, 1791,

by invitation of the members of this club, and "on the 12th did business with the secret committee, who are not known or suspected of co-operating, but who, in fact, direct the movements in Belfast". He at once set about remodelling certain resolutions of this association. On the 18th of October, Tone speaks of the first regular meeting of the United Irishmen which he attended in Belfast; twenty members present; the club consisting of thirty-six original members.

The declaration of the Society of United Irishmen, drawn up by Tone, and read at the first general meeting, the 18th of October, 1791, in Belfast, stated, "the great measure essential to the prosperity and freedom of Ireland was an equal representation of all the people of Ireland". The great evil was English influence. "We have no national government We are ruled by Englishmen and the servants of Englishmen, whose object is the interest of another country, whose instrument is corruption, and whose strength is the weakness of Ireland: and these men have the whole of the power and patronage of the country as means to seduce and to subdue the honesty and the spirit of her representatives in the legislature", etc.

To effect their objects the declaration states, "The Society of United Irishmen has been formed". The following resolutions were proposed and carried:—

"1st. That the weight of English influence in the government of this country is so great as to require a cordial union among all the people of Ireland, to maintain that balance which is essential to the preservation of our liberties and the extension of our commerce.

"2nd. That the sole constitutional mode by which this influence can be opposed is by a complete and radical reform of the representation of the people in parliament.

"3rd. That no reform is just which does not include Irishmen of every religious persuasion".*

In the month of November, 1791, Tone, having returned to Dublin, consulted with Napper Tandy about the formation of another society like that of Belfast, in Dublin; and, in a few weeks, the Society of United Irishmen was established in the capital.

The first chairman of the meetings in Dublin was the Hon. Simon Butler, and the first secretary, James Napper Tandy. It is worthy of attention that both Tone and Tandy at this period were republicans, and yet the society they founded was formed expressly to obtain a reform in parliament and the abolition of the penal code. In fact, whatever their own views were with respect to republicanism or separation, the great body of the original members looked to the achieve-

* Vide "Life of T. W. Tone". Washington edition, vol. i.

ment of reform alone; and even Tone himself says: "At this time the establishment of a republic was not the immediate object of my speculations: my object was to secure the independence of my country under any form of government", etc. Tone states, "the club was scarcely formed before he lost all pretensions to anything like influence in their measure". That he "sunk into obscurity in the club, which, however, he had the satisfaction to see daily increasing in numbers and importance".

The first meeting of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen took place at the Eagle Tavern, in Eustace Street, the 9th of November, 1791, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair, James Napper Tandy secretary. The declaration and resolutions of the Belfast Society were adopted at that meeting.

Constitution of the Society of United Irishmen of the City of Dublin, as first agreed upon.

The society is constituted for the purpose of forwarding a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a communion of rights, and an union of power, among Irishmen of all religious persuasions, and thereby obtaining an impartial and adequate representation of the nation in parliament.

The members of this society are either ordinary or honorary.

Such persons only are eligible as honorary members who have distinguished themselves by promoting the liberties of mankind, and are not inhabitants of Ireland.

Every candidate for admission into the society, whether as an ordinary or honorary member, shall be proposed by two ordinary members, who shall sign a certificate of his being, from their knowledge of him, a fit person to be admitted, that he has seen the test, and is willing to take it. This certificate, delivered to the secretary, shall be read from the chair at the ensuing meeting of the society; and on the next subsequent night of meeting, the society shall proceed to the election. The names and additions of the candidate, with the names of those by whom he has been proposed, shall be inserted in the summons for the night of election. The election shall be conducted by ballot, and if one-fifth of the number of beans be black, the candidate stands rejected. The election, with respect to an ordinary member, shall be void if he does not attend within four meetings afterwards, unless he can plead some reasonable excuse for his absence.

Every person elected a member of the society, whether honorary or ordinary, shall, previous to his admission, take and subscribe the following test:—

"I, A. B., in the presence of God, do pledge myself to my country, that I will use all my abilities and influence in the attainment of an impartial and adequate representation of the Irish nation in parliament; and as a means of absolute and immediate necessity in the establishment of this chief good of Ireland, I will endeavour, as much as lies in my ability, to forward a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interests, a communion of rights, and an union of power, among Irishmen of all religious persuasions, without which every reform in parliament must be partial, not national, inadequate to the wants, delusive to the wishes, and insufficient for the freedom and happiness of this country".

A member of another society of United Irishmen being introduced to the president by a member of this society, shall, upon producing a certificate, signed by the secretary, and sealed with the seal of the society to which he belongs, and taking the beforementioned test, be thereupon admitted to attend the sittings of this society.

The officers of the society shall consist of a president, treasurer, and secretary, who shall be severally elected every three months, viz., on every first night of meeting in the months of November, February, May, and August; the election to be determined by each member present writing on a piece of paper the names of the object of his choice, and putting it into a box. The majority of votes shall decide. If the votes are equal the president shall have a casting voice. No person shall be capable of being re-elected to any office for the quarter next succeeding the determination of his office. In case of an occasional vacancy in any office by death, or otherwise, the society shall, on the next night of meeting, elect a person to the same for the remainder of the quarter.

The society shall meet on every second Friday night; oftener if necessary. The chair shall be taken at eight o'clock from 29th September to the 25th of March, and at nine o'clock, from the 25th of March to the 29th of September. Fifteen members shall form a quorum. No new business shall be introduced after ten o'clock.

Every respect and deference shall be paid to the president. His chair shall be raised three steps above the seats of the members; the treasurer and secretary shall have seats under him, two steps above the seats of the members. On his rising from his chair and taking off his hat, there must be silence, and the members be seated. He shall be judge of order and propriety, be empowered to direct an apology, and to fine refractory members in any sum not above one crown. If the member refuse to pay the fine, or make an apology, he is thereupon expelled from the society.

HEPENSTAL "THE WALKING GALLOWS".
(From an old Print).

There shall be a committee of constitution, of finance, of correspondence, and of accomodation. The committee of constitution shall consist of nine members; that of finance, of seven members; that of correspondence, of five members. Each committee shall, independent of occasional reports, make general reports on every quarterly meeting. The treasurer shall be under the direction of the committee of finance, and the secretary under the direction of the committee of correspondence. The election for committees shall be on every quarterly meeting, and decided by the majority of votes.

In order to defray the necessary expenses, and establish a fund for the use of the society, each ordinary member shall, on his election, pay to the treasurer, by those who proposed him, one guinea admission fee, and also one guinea annually, by half-yearly payments, on every first night of meeting in November and May; the first payment thereof to be on the first night of meeting in November, 1792. On every quarterly meeting following, the names of the defaulters, as they appear in the treasury-book, shall be read from the chair. If any member, after the second reading, neglect to pay his subscription, he shall be excluded the society, unless he can show some reasonable excuse for his default.

The secretary shall be furnished with the following seal:—viz., a harp—at the top, "I am new strung"; at the bottom, "I will be heard"; and on the exergue, "Society of United Irishmen of Dublin".

No motion for an alteration of, or addition to, the constitution shall be made but at the quarterly meetings, and notice of such motion shall be given fourteen days previous to those meetings. If upon such motion the society shall see ground for the proposed alteration or addition, the same shall be referred to the proper committee, with instructions to report on the next night of meeting their opinions thereon; and upon such report the question shall be decided by the society.

Theobald Wolfe Tone, the original and principal founder of the institution, in a letter addressed to one of his friends at Belfast, containing the resolutions and declarations written by him, upon which the institution was founded, observed—

"The foregoing contain my true and sincere opinion of the state of this country, so far as in the present juncture it may be advisable to publish it. They certainly fall short of the truth, but truth itself must sometimes condescend to temporize. My unalterable opinion is, that the bane of

Irish prosperity is in the influence of England; I believe that influence will ever be extended while the connexion between the two countries continues; nevertheless, as I know that opinion is for the present too hardy, though a very little time may establish it universally, I have not made it a part of the resolutions. I have only proposed to set up a reformed parliament as a barrier against that mischief which every honest man that will open his eyes must see in every instance overbears the interest of Ireland: I have not said one word that looks like a wish for separation, though I give it to you and your friends as my most decided opinion, that such an event would be a regeneration to this country.

"I have, you will see, alluded to the resolutions of the Whig Club, and I have differed with them in degree only—that is, I think, and I am sure, they do not go far enough; they are not sincere friends to the popular cause; they dread the people as much as the Castle does. It may be objected that an implied difference of sentiment between them and the people will weaken both: I think otherwise. If they do not join you in supporting a reform in parliament, they do not deserve support themselves; apply the touchstone—if they stand the trial, well; if they fail, they are false and hollow, and the sooner they are detected the better; what signifies peddling with their superficial measures? They are good so far as they go, but for the people to spend their strength in pursuit of such, would be just as wise as for a man who has a mortification in his bowels to be very solicitous about a plaister for his forefinger. To be candid, I dare say that my Lord Charlemont, and I am pretty sure that Mr. Grattan, would hesitate very much at the resolutions which I send; but I only beg you will dismiss your respect for great names; read over the resolutions and what I have now said, and then determine impartially between us. I have alluded to the Catholics, but so remotely as I hope not to alarm the most cautious Protestant; it is wicked nonsense to talk of a reform in Ireland in which they shall not have their due share.

"I have in the third resolution, conceded very far indeed to what I consider as vulgar and ignorant prejudices: look at France and America; the Pope burnt in effigy at Paris; the English Catholics seceding from his church. A thousand arguments crowd on me, but it is unnecessary here to dwell on them. I hope you will find this resolution sufficiently guarded and cool. I have been purposely vague and indefinite; and I must say, men who would seek a reform, and admit that indispensable step, have different notions both of expediency and justice from any that I can conceive.

"I think the best opportunity for publishing them will be on the 14th of July; I learn there is to be a commemoration of the French Revolution, that morning star of liberty

to Ireland. The Volunteers, if they approve of the plan, may then adopt it, and I have so worded it as to leave them an opportunity. I have left, as you see, a blank for the name, which, I am clearly of opinion, should be, 'The Society of United Irishmen' ".

Circular, dated Friday, December 30, 1791.

Society of United Irishmen of Dublin.

The Honourable Simon Butler, Chairman.

" Resolved unanimously, that the following circular letter, reported by our Committee of Correspondence, be adopted and printed:—

" This letter is addressed to you from the Corresponding Committee of the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin.

" We annex the declaration of political principles which we have subscribed, and the test which we have taken, as a social and sacred compact to bind us more closely together.

" The object of this institution is to make an United Society of the Irish nation; to make all Irishmen Citizens—all Citizens Irishmen; nothing appearing to us more natural at all times, and at this crisis of Europe more seasonable, than that those who have common interests and common enemies, who suffer common wrongs, and lay claim to common rights, should know each other, and should act together. In our opinion, ignorance has been the demon of discord, which has so long deprived Irishmen, not only of the blessings of well-regulated government, but even the common benefits of civil society. Peace in this island has hitherto been a peace on the principles and with the consequences of civil war. For a century past, there has, indeed, been tranquillity, but to most of our dear countrymen it has been the tranquility of a dungeon; and if the land has lately prospered, it has been owing to the goodness of Providence, and the strong efforts of human nature, resisting and overcoming the malignant influence of a miserable administration.

" To resist this influence, which rules by discord and embroils by system, it is vain to act as individuals or as parties; it becomes necessary, by an union of minds, and a knowledge of each other, to will and act as a nation. To know each other is to know ourselves—the weakness of one, and the strength of many. Union, therefore, is power; it is wisdom; it must prove liberty.

" Our design, therefore, in forming this society, it to give an example, which, when well followed, must collect the public will, and concentrate the public power, into one solid

mass, the effect of which, once put in motion, must be rapid, momentous, and consequential.

"In thus associating, we have thought little about our ancestors, much of our posterity. Are we for ever to walk like beasts of prey, over fields which these ancestors stained with blood? In looking back, we see nothing on the one part but savage force, succeeded by savage policy; on the other, an unfortunate nation, 'scattered and peeled, meted out, and trodden down!' We see a mutual intolerance, and a common carnage of the first moral emotions of the heart which lead us to esteem and place confidence in our fellow-creatures. We see this, and are silent. But we gladly look forward to brighter prospects; to a people united in the fellowship of freedom; to a parliament the express image of the people; to a prosperity established on civil, political, and religious liberty; to a peace— not the gloomy and precarious stillness of men brooding over their wrongs, but that stable tranquillity which rests on the rights of human nature, and leans on the arms by which these rights are to be maintained.

"Our principle rule of conduct has been to attend to those things in which we agree, to exclude from our thoughts those in which we differ. We agree in knowing what are our rights, and in daring to assert them. If the rights of men be duties to God, we are, in this respect, of one religion. Our creed of civil faith is the same. We agree in thinking that there is not an individual among our millions, whose happiness can be established on any foundation so rational and so solid, as on the happiness of the whole community. We agree, therefore, in the necessity of giving political value and station to the great majority of the people; and we think that whoever desires an amended constitution, without including the great body of the people, must on his own principles be convicted of political persecution and political monopoly. If the present electors be themselves a morbid part of our constitution, where are we to recur for redress but to the whole community? 'A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised, than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves'.

"We agree in thinking, that the first and most indispensable condition of the laws in a free state, is the assent of those whose obedience they require, and for whose benefit only they are designed. Without, therefore, an impartial and adequate representation of the community, we agree in declaring, we can have no constitution, no country, no Ireland. Without this, our late revolution we declare to be fallacious and ideal—a thing much talked of, but neither felt nor seen. The act of Irish sovereignty has been merely tossed out of the English Houses into the cabinet of the

Minister; and nothing remains to the people, who of right are everything, but a servile majesty and a ragged independence.

"We call most earnestly on every great and good man, who at the late era spoke or acted for his country, to consider less of what was done, than of what there remains to do. We call upon their senatorial wisdom to consider the monstrous and immeasurable distance which separates, in this island, the ranks of social life, makes labour ineffectual, taxation unproductive, and divides the nation into petty despotism and public misery. We call upon their tutelar genius to remember, that government is instituted to remedy, not to render more grievous, the natural inequalities of mankind, and that, unless the rights of the whole community be asserted, anarchy (we cannot call it government) must continue to prevail, when the strong tyrannize, the rich oppress, and the mass are brayed as in a mortar. We call upon them, therefore, to build their arguments and their actions on the broad platform of general good.

"Let not the rights of nature be enjoyed merely by connivance, and the rights of conscience merely by toleration. If you raise up a prone people, let it not be merely to their knees. Let the nation stand. Then will it cast away the bad habit of servitude, which has brought with it indolence, ignorance, and extinction of our faculties—an abandonment of our very nature. Then will every right obtained, every franchise exerted, prove a seed of sobriety, industry, and regard to character, and the manners of the people will be formed on the model of their free constitution.

"This rapid exposition of our principles, our object, and our rule of conduct, must naturally suggest the wish of multiplying similar societies, and the propriety of addressing such a desire to you. Is it necessary for us to request that you will hold out your hand and open your heart to your countryman, townsman, neighbour? Can you form a hope for political redemption, and by political penalties, or civil excommunications, withhold the rights of nature from your brother? We beseech you to rally all the friends of liberty within your circle round a society of this kind as a centre. Draw together your best and bravest thoughts, your best and bravest men. You will experience, as we have done, that these points of union will quickly attract numbers, while the assemblage of such societies, acting in concert, moving as one body, with one impulse and one direction, will, in no long time, become, not parts of the nation, but the nation itself, speaking with its voice, expressing its will, resistless in its power. We again entreat, you to look around for men fit to form those stable supports on which Ireland may rest the lever of liberty. If there be but ten, take those ten. If there be but two, take

those two, and trust with confidence to the sincerity of your intention, the justice of your cause, and the support of your country.

"Two objects interest the nation: A plan of representation, and the means of accomplishing it. These societies will be a most powerful means. But a popular plan would itself be a means for its own accomplishment. We have, therefore, to request that you will favour us with your ideas respecting the plan which appears to you most eligible and practicable, on the present more enlarged and liberal principles which actuate the people; at the same time giving your sentiments upon our national coalition, on the means of promoting it, and on the political state and disposition of the country or town where you reside. We know what resistance will be made to your patriotic efforts by those who triumph in the disunion and degradation of their country. The greater the necessity for reform, the greater will be the resistance. We know that there is much spirit that requires being brought into mass, as well as much massy body that must be refined into spirit. We have many enemies, and no enemy is contemptible. We do not despise the enemies of the union, the liberty, and the peace of Ireland, but we are not of a nature, nor have we encouraged the habit of fearing any man, or any body of men, in an honest and honourable cause. In great undertakings like the present, we declare that we have found it always more difficult to attempt than to accomplish. The people of Ireland must perform all that they wish, if they attempt all that they can.

"Signed by order,

"JAMES NAPPER TANDY, Sec."

At the different meetings of the society, in 1791 and 1792, the language used was uniformly bold, and violent, and imprudent. At the close of the latter year, at a meeting of which William Drennan was chairman, and Archibald Hamilton Rowan secretary, an address was submitted, in which a convention was proposed, and the object of the society was declared to be, "a national legislature, and its means an union of the people. The government is called on, if it has a sincere regard for the safety of the constitution, to coincide with the people in the speedy reform of its abuses, and not by an obstinate adherence to them, to drive the people into republicanism".

Extract from an Address from the Society of United Irishmen in Dublin to the Delegates for promoting a Reform in Scotland.*

William Drennan, Chairman.
Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Secretary.

November 23, 1792.

"We take the liberty of addressing you in the spirit of civil union, in the fellowship of a just and common cause. We greatly rejoice that the spirit of freedom moves over Scotland; that the light seems to break from the chaos of her internal government; and that a country so respectable for her attainments in science, in arts, and in arms, for men of literary eminence, for the intelligence and morality of her people, now acts from a conviction of the union between virtue, letters, and liberty, and now rises to distinction, not by a calm, contented, secret wish for a reform in parliament, but by openly, actively, and urgently willing it, with the unity and energy of an embodied nation. We rejoice that you do not consider yourselves as merged and melted down into another country, but that in this great national question, you are still Scotland—the land where Buchanan wrote, and Fletcher spoke, and Wallace fought.

"Away from us and our children these puerile antipathies, so unworthy of the manhood of nations, which insulate individuals as well as countries, and drive the citizen back to the savage! We esteem and we respect you. We pay merited honour to a nation, in general well educated and well informed, because we know that the ignorance of the people is the cause and effect of all civil and religious despotism. We honour a nation regular in their lives, and strict in their manners, because we conceive private morality to be the only secure foundation of public policy. We honour a nation eminent for men of genius, and we trust that they will now exert themselves, not so much in perusing and penning the histories of other countries, as in making their own a subject for the historian. May we venture to observe to them, that mankind have been too retrospective, canonized antiquity, and undervalued themselves. Man has reposed on ruins, and rested his head on some fragments of the temple of liberty, or at most, amused himself in pacing the measurement of the edifice, and nicely limiting its proportions, not reflecting that this temple is truly catholic, the ample Earth its area, and the arch of Heaven its dome.

* Written by Dr. Drennan.

"We will lay open to you our own hearts. Our cause is your cause. If there is to be a struggle between us, let it be which nation shall be foremost in the race of mind; let this be the noble animosity kindled between us, who shall first attain that free constitution, from which both are equidistant—who shall first be the saviour of the empire.

"In this society, and its affiliated societies, the Catholic and the Presbyterian are at this instant holding out their hands and opening their hearts to each other; agreeing in principles, concurring in practice. We unite for immediate, ample, and substantial justice to the Catholics, and when that is attained, a combined exertion for reform in parliament is the condition of our compact and the seal of our communion.

"Universal emancipation, with representative legislature, is the polar principle which guides our society, and shall guide it through all the tumult of factions and fluctuations of parties. It is not upon a coalition of opposition with ministry that we depend, but upon a coalition of Irishmen with Irishmen, and in that coalition alone, we find an object worthy of reform, and at the same time the strength and sinew both to attain and secure it. It is not upon external circumstances, upon the pledge of man or minister, we depend, but upon the internal energy of the Irish nation. We will not buy or borrow liberty from America or France, but manufacture it ourselves, and work it up with those materials which the hearts of Irishmen furnish them with at home. We do not worship the British, far less the Irish, constitution, as sent down from Heaven, but we consider it as human workmanship, which man has made and man can mend. An unalterable constitution, whatever be its nature, must be despotism. It is not the constitution but the people which ought to be inviolable, and it is time to recognize and renovate the rights of the English, the Scotch, and the Irish nations—rights which can neither be bought nor sold, granted by charter, or forestalled by monopoly, but which nature dictates as the birth-right of all, and which it is the business of a constitution to define, to enforce, and to establish. If government has a sincere regard for the safety of the constitution, let them coincide with the people in the speedy reform of its abuses, and not by an obstinate adherence to them, drive that people into republicanism.

"We have told you what our situation was, what it is, what it ought to be: our end, a national legislature; our means, an union of the whole people. Let this union extend throughout the empire; let all unite for all, or each man suffer for all. In each county let the people assemble, in peaceful and constitutional convention"....

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN. Born at Newmarket, Co. Cork, 1750. Educated at Trinity College, Dublin. He was called to the Irish Bar in 1775. After seven years at the Bar he became a King's Counsel, and in 1783 entered the Irish House of Commons as Member for Kilbeggan, Co. Westmeath. In 1785 he supported the Patriot Party, and fought a duel with Fitzgibbon. In 1794 he detended Hamilton Rowan, and from that period he appeared in all the state trials as an advocate for the prisoners. He firmly opposed the Union proposals, and was a warm advocate of Catholic Emancipation. He became Master of the Rolls in 1806. In 1814 he retired from the Bench and died in London on the 14th October, 1817. In 1824 his remains were removed to a tomb in Glasnevin Cemetery. Curran's wit and conversational powers were so brilliant that they have almost eclipsed his reputation as a Statesman and an advocate. Byron says:—"I have heard that man speak more poetry than I have ever seen written, though I saw him seldom, and but occasionally."

The Society of United Irishmen, at Dublin, to the Volunteers of Ireland.

William Drennan, Chairman.
Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Secretary.

"December 14, 1792.

"CITIZEN SOLDIERS,

"You first took up arms to protect your country from foreign enemies and from domestic disturbance. For the same purposes it now becomes necessary that you should resume them. A proclamation has been issued in England for embodying the militia; and a proclamation has been issued by the Lord Lieutenant and Council in Ireland, for repressing all seditious associations. In consequence of both these proclamations, it is reasonable to apprehend danger from abroad and danger at home. From whence but from apprehended danger are those menacing preparations for war drawn through the streets of this capital, or whence, if not to create that internal commotion which was not found, to shake that credit which was not affected, to blast that Volunteer honour which was hitherto inviolate, are those terrible suggestions and rumours and whispers that meet us at every corner, and agitate, at least, our old men, our women, and children. Whatever be the motive, or from whatever quarter it arises, alarm has arisen, and you, **Volunteers of Ireland**, are thus summoned to arms at the instance of government, as well as by the responsibility attached to your character, and the permanent obligations of your institution. We will not at this day condescend to quote authorities for the right of having and of using arms, but we will cry aloud, even amidst the storm raised by the witchcraft of a proclamation, that to your formation was owing the peace and protection of this island; to your relaxation has been owing its relapse into impotence and insignificance; to your renovation must be owing its future freedom and its present tranquillity. You are therefore summoned to arms, in order to preserve your country in that guarded quiet which may secure it from external hostility, and to maintain that internal regimen throughout the land, which, superseding a notorious police or a suspected militia, may preserve the blessings of peace by a vigilant preparation for war.

"Citizen Soldiers, to arms! Take up the shield of freedom and the pledges of peace—peace, the motive and end of your virtuous institution. War, an occasional duty, ought never to be made an occupation. Every man should become a soldier in the defence of his rights; no man ought to continue a soldier for offending the rights of others. The

sacrifice of life in the service of our country is a duty much too honourable to be entrusted to mercenaries, and at this time, when your country has by public authority been declared in danger, we conjure you, by your interest, your duty, and your glory, to stand to your arms, and in spite of a fensible militia, in virtue of two proclamations, to maintain good order in your vicinage and tranquillity in Ireland. It is only by the military array of men in whom they confide, whom they have been accustomed to revere as the guardians of domestic peace, the protectors of their liberties and lives, that the present agitation of the people can be stilled, that tumult and licentiousness can be repressed, obedience secured to existing law, and a calm confidence diffused through the public mind in the speedy resurrection of a free constitution—of liberty and equality—words which we use for an opportunity of repelling calumny, and of saying that, by liberty we never understood unlimited freedom, nor by equality the levelling of property or the destruction of subordination. This is a calumny invented by that faction or that gang which misrepresents the King to the people, and the people to the King, traduces one-half of the nation to cajole the other, and by keeping up distrust and division, wishes to continue the proud arbitrators of the fortune and fate of Ireland. Liberty is the exercise of all our rights, natural and political, secured to us and our posterity by a real representation of the people; and equality is the extension of the constituent to the fullest dimensions of the constitution of the elective franchise to the whole body of the people, to the end that government, which is collective power, may be guided by collective will, and that legislation may originate from public reason, keep pace with public improvement, and terminate in public happiness. If our constitution be imperfect, nothing but a reform in representation will rectify its abuses; if it be perfect, nothing but the same reform will perpetuate its blessings.

"We now address you as citizens, for to be citizens you became soldiers; nor can we help wishing that all soldiers partaking the passions and interests of the people, would remember that they were once citizens, that seduction made them soldiers, 'but nature made them men'. We address you without any authority save that of reason; and if we obtain the coincidence of public opinion, it is neither by force nor stratagem, for we have no power to terrify, no artifice to cajole, no fund to seduce. Here we sit, without mace or beadle, neither a mystery, nor a craft, nor a corporation. In four words lies all our power—**Universal Emancipation** and **Representative Legislature**; yet we are confident that on the pivot of this principle, a convention—still less a society—less still, a single man, would be able, first to move

and then to raise the world. We therefore wish for Catholic emancipation without any modification; but still we consider this necessary enfranchisement as merely the portal to the temple of national freedom. Wide as this entrance is— wide enough to admit three millions—it is narrow when compared to the capacity and comprehension of our beloved principle, which takes in every individual of the Irish nation, casts an equal eye over the whole island, embraces all that think, and feels for all that suffer. The Catholic cause is subordinate to our cause, and included in it; for as **United Irishmen** we adhere to no sect but to society, to no creed but Christianity, to no party but the whole people. In the sincerity of our souls do we desire Catholic emancipation; but were it obtained to-morrow, to-morrow would we go on, as we do to-day, in the pursuit of that reform which would still be waiting to ratify their liberties as well as our own.

"For both these purposes, it appears necessary that provincial conventions should assemble preparatory to the convention of the Protestant people. The delegates of the Catholic body are not justified in communicating with individuals, or even bodies of inferior authority, and therefore an assembly of a similar nature and organization is necessary to establish an intercourse of sentiment, an uniformity of conduct, an united cause, and an united nation. If a convention on the one part does not soon follow, and is not soon connected with that on the other, the common cause will split into the partial interest; the people will relax into inattention and inertness; the union of affection and exertion will dissolve, and too probably some local insurrection, instigated by the malignity of our common enemy, may commit the character, and risk the tranquillity of the island, which can be obviated only by the influence of an assembly arising from, assimilated with the people, and whose spirit may be as it were knit with the soul of the nation, Unless the sense of the Protestant people be on their part as fairly collected and as judiciously directed, unless individual exertion consolidates into collective strength, unless the particles unite into mass, we may perhaps serve some person or some party for a little, but the public not at all. The nation is neither insolent nor rebellious nor seditious. While it knows its rights it is unwilling to manifest its powers. It would rather supplicate administration to anticipate revolution by a well-timed reform, and to save their country in mercy to themselves.

"The 15th of February approaches, a day ever memorable in the annals of this country as the birth-day of New Ireland. Let parochial meetings be held as soon as possible. Let each parish return delegates. Let the sense of Ulster be again declared from Dungannon on a day auspicious to union, peace, and freedom, and the spirit of the north will

again become the spirit of the nation. The civil assembly ought to claim the attendance of the military associations, and we have addressed you, citizen soldiers, on this subject, from the belief that your body, uniting conviction with zeal, and zeal with activity, may have much influence over our countrymen, your relations and friends. We offer only a general outline to the public, and meaning to address Ireland, we presume not at present to fill up the plan, or pre occupy the mode of its execution. We have thought it our duty to speak: answer us by actions; you have taken time for consideration. Fourteen long years have elapsed since the rise of your associations; and in 1782 did you imagine that in 1792 this nation would still remain unrepresented? How many nations in the interval have gotten the start of Ireland? How many of our countrymen have sank into the grave?"

Extracts from an Address of the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin to the People of Ireland, propounding a plan of Reform.

"PEOPLE OF IRELAND,

"We now submit to your consideration a plan for your equal representation in the House of Commons. In framing it, we have disregarded the many overcharged accusations, which we hear daily made by the prejudiced and the corrupt, against the people, their independence, integrity, and understanding. We are, ourselves, but a portion of the people; and that appellation, we feel, confers more real honour and importance than can, in these times, be derived from places, pensions, or titles. As little have we consulted the sentiments of administration or of opposition. We have attentively observed them both, and whatever we may hope of some members of the latter, we firmly believe that both those parties are equally averse from the measure of adequate reform. If we have no other reason for that opinion, the plan laid before parliament in the last session, under the auspices of opposition, might convince us of the melancholy truth. Thus circumstanced, then, distrusting all parties, we hold it the right and the duty of every man in the nation to examine, deliberate, and decide for himself on that important measure. As a portion of the people (for in no other capacity, we again repeat it, do we presume to address you) we suggest to you our ideas, by which we would provide to preserve the popular part of the legislature, uninfluenced by, and independent of, the other two parts, and to effectuate that essential principle of justice and of our constitution, that every man has the right of voting, through the medium of his representative, for the

law by which he is bound: that sacred principle, for which America fought, and by which Ireland was emancipated from British supremacy ! If our ideas are right, which we feel an honest conviction they are, adopt them; if wrong, discussion will detect their errors, and we at least shall be always found ready to profit by, and conform ourselves to, the sentiments of the people.

"Our present state of representation is charged with being unequal, unjust, and by no means calculated to express your deliberate will on any subject of general importance. We have endeavoured to point out the remedies of those evils by a more equal distribution of political power and liberty, by doing justice, and by anxiously providing that your deliberate will shall be at all times accurately expressed in your own branch of the legislature. If these are not the principles of good government, we have yet to learn from the placemen and pensioners that flit about the Castle in what the science of politics can consist. But we know they are, and we are bold to say, that the more a government carries these principles in to effect the nearer it approaches to perfection.

"We believe it will be said that our plan, however just, is impracticable in the present state of this country. If any part of that impracticability should be supposed to result from the interested resistance of borough proprietors, although we never will consent to compromise the public right, yet we, for our parts, might not hesitate to purchase the public peace by an adequate compensation. At all events it rests with you, countrymen, not with us, to remove the objection.

"To you among our countrymen, for whose welfare we have peculiarly laboured from the first moment of our institution, and the contemplation of whose prosperity will more than compensate us for the sufferings we may have endured, for the calumnies with which we are aspersed, and for those which the publication of this unpalatable plan will call down upon us,—to you, the poorer classes of the community, we now address ourselves. We are told you are ignorant; we wish you to enjoy liberty, without which no people was ever enlightened. We are told you are uneducated and immoral; we wish you to be educated, and your morality improved, by the most rapid of all instructors—a good government. Do you find yourselves sunk in poverty and wretchedness ? Are you overloaded with burdens you are little able to bear ? Do you feel many grievances which it would be tedious, and might be unsafe to mention ? Believe us, they can all be redressed by such a reform as will give you your just proportion of influence in the legislature, **and by such a measure only.** To that, therefore, we wish to rivet all your attention".

A plan of an equal Representation of the People of Ireland in the House of Commons, prepared for public consideration by the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin.

"I. That the nation, for the purpose of representation solely, should be divided into three hundred electorates, formed by a combination of parishes, and as nearly as possible equal in point of population.

"II. That each electorate should return one representative to parliament.

"III. That each electorate should, for the convenience of carrying on the elections at the same time, be subdivided into a sufficient number of parts.

"IV. That there should be a returning officer for each electorate, and a deputy returning officer for each subdivision, to be respectively elected.

"V. That the electors of the electorate should vote, each in the subdivision in which he is registered, and has resided as hereinafter specified.

"VI. That the returning officers of the subdivisions should serverally return their respective polls to the returning officer of the electorate, who should tot up the whole, and return the person having a majority of votes, as the representative in parliament.

"VII. That every man possessing the right of suffrage for a representative in parliament should exercise it in his own person only.

"VIII. That no person should have a right to vote in more than one electorate at the same election.

"IX. That every male of sound mind, who has attained the full age of twenty-one years, and actually dwelt, or maintained a family establishment, in any electorate for six months of the twelve immediately previous to the commencement of the election (provided his residence or maintaining a family establishment be duly registered), should be entitled to vote for the representative of the electorate.

"X. That there should be a registering officer, and a registry of residence in every subdivision of each electorate; and that in all questions concerning residence, the registry should be considered as conclusive evidence.

"XI. That all elections in the nation should commence and close on the same day.

"XII. That the votes of all electors should be given by voice and not by ballot.

"XIII. That no oath of any kind should be taken by any elector.

"XIV. That the full age of twenty-five years should be a necessary qualification to entitle any man to be a representative.

"XV. That residence within the electorate should not, but that residence within the kingdom should, be a necessary qualification for a representative.

"XVI. That no property qualification should be necessary to entitle any man to be a representative.

"XVII. That any person having a pension, or holding a place in the executive or judicial departments, should be thereby disqualified from being a representative.

"XVIII. That representatives should receive a reasonable stipend for their services.

"XIX. That every representative should, on taking his seat, swear that neither he, nor any person to promote his interest, with his privity, gave or was to give any bribe for the suffrage of any voter.

"XX. That any representative convicted by a jury of having acted contrary to the substance of the above oath, should be for ever disqualified from sitting or voting in parliament.

"XXI. That parliament should be annual.

"XXII. That a representative should be at liberty to resign his delegation upon giving sufficient notice to his constituents.

"XXIII. That absence from duty for should vacate the seat of a representative".

How the reform efforts of the United Irishmen were viewed in parliament, and by some remarkable members of it, we may learn from the following extracts from the published report of the debate on Reform, the 10th February, 1793.

One of the speakers, Sir Boyle Roche, it is not publicly known, was then ambitious of a peerage. From the original Precis Book of Lord Fitzwilliam, of the application of various persons for appointments, dignities, and preferments during his viceroyalty, I make the following extract.

"12th January, 1795. Sir Boyle Roche wishes to be made a peer, and desires to know whether Lord W(estmoreland) recommended him".

Reform Question—Irish Commons, 10th February, 1793.

"Mr. Forbes moved, 'that the returning officer, town clerk, or the person who is entrusted with the books, do return to this house a list of the names of the electors in each borough in this kingdom, and their qualification to use the right of the elective franchise, and that they do attend this house this day fortnight, and give information touching the same'.

"Right Hon. Sir Hercules Langrishe—Mr. Speaker, when a few days ago a proposition similar to the present was offered to this house, I opposed it, as the information it would produce must be imperfect; as it might in its effects be injurious to the parties concerned; as it was utterly useless for the purposes it professed, and in its inference and operation could not but prove detrimental to the public. On the same grounds, sir, I shall oppose the present motion, as being liable to the same objections: that the information to be derived from it must be imperfect, no man can doubt, who considers that in many instances the corporation books do not contain a list of the respective voters; as, besides those entered in the books, several are entitled to freedom by birth, service, or marriage; several became electors by freehold,or residence, or dockets, as the case may be, which, as they are always variable, are not cognizable by the town clerk or other officer. Sir, laying before parliament the corporation books, or returns of the state of every borough in Ireland, must be extremely injurious; it will be a sort of parliament quo warranto against the boroughs; it will expose lapses and omissions, and produce pernicious litigation. The measure is utterly useless as to the purpose professed; for parliamentary reform is a measure not to be grounded on arithmetical calculation, but on general acknowledged principles; and everybody knows there are boroughs that contain few constituents; everybody knows that the people are not equally represented: they never were so, for if it were so, we should not have the blessings of the British constitution, but the scourge of a democracy.

"Sir Boyle Roche—Sir, this is the critical period in which every loyal subject should declare his sentiments in the boldest and most public manner, and express his disapprobation of any measure that may be conceived to be an encouragement to the propagation of French principles; and as I consider a parliamentary reform to have that direct tendency, I openly enter my protest against it. I consider it as a masked battery, under the protection and covert of which the Dungannon reformers, the society called United Irishmen, the Defenders, and Break-of-day Boys, are advancing to the foot of the glacis of the citadel of the constitution, there to make a lodgment, and the garrison is called upon to defend itself. I am very glad, however, that this subject has been opened in the committee, that the public may see the futility and the wickedness of it. This is the third or fourth night we have sat upon it, and I ask whether the reformers have brought forth any plan that the greatest madman amongst us would agree to? La Fayette was a great reformer; he and his party (amongst whom were many of the principal nobility of France) began with the abuses of the monarchy. As they proceeded, the

epidemic madness seized them, and they thought it necessary to sacrifice to public clamour their immunities, their honours, their seignories, which in fact to them were their boroughs, handed down to them by their ancestors. Whilst they were thus going on reforming themselves and the state, there was a bloody Jacobin party observing their motions, and took the first opportunity of jumping on their necks, cutting their throats, and of burying them, the monarchy and monarch, in the same grave.

"Mr. Barrington—Sir, having been personally called upon by an honourable member (Mr. Forbes) to give my reason why I conceived the present opposition were not popular, I feel it my duty not to decline the question. The honourable member has urged it, and he shall be indulged. The gentlemen who at this period very justly style themselves the opposition of Ireland, are becoming unpopular, because their principles are suspicious, their systems dangerous, and their conduct inconsistent; the eyes of Ireland are opening to them, penetration is alive, and the popular imposture can no longer sail under the false colours of public virtue. Their principle is obviously to supplant the government and not to serve the people; their contests are contests for favour and not struggles for liberty; their system is a system of imitation and not the course of wisdom. The house has sat little more than three weeks, and some gentlemen have affected to agitate the public mind, because within that short period a general revolution, in both church and state, has not been effected; a confusion of measures is necessary for their purpose; at the same period, things jumbled together in one unintelligible chaos, in the form of bills and motions—every species of innovation they can think of—external reform, internal reform, ecclesiastical rights, military arrangements, civil restriction, religious emancipation, prerogative, finance, legislation, and religion, all to be modified in one week; but, as Hudibras says—

> 'Some men carry things so even
> 'Tween this world, and Hell, and Heaven,
> Without the least offence to either,
> They freely jumble all together'.

"Hon. Robert Stewart [the future Lord Castlereagh]—Sir, I certainly think the conduct of administration on this subject totally unintelligible. Their prevarication through the whole of the business is obvious, and they have been guilty of special pleading to every motion that has been proposed. Why did administration grant the committee, but to inquire ?—and how can they inquire without the materials called for ? I should advise them rather to oppose fairly and openly than in this insidious and cowardly

manner. It certainly would be more candid and becoming in administration to stand forward and resist a reform. To establish a moderate and reformed system is the only way to secure strength to the throne, and this system cannot be established without changing the present one. Sir, if administration is sincere in redressing the grievances of the people, they may depend on receiving from me my warmest support. I am ready to vote any money from my constituents to support the established form of government, but I will vote none to support the abuses and vices of the constitution. To give government too much strength while they are determined to support those vices, would be to give men an instrument for their own destruction, and could tend only to establish a military government. Notwithstanding, sir, all that had been said of the difficulty of effecting a reform, I think a reasonable system, such as would gratify all reasonable men, might very easily be devised, and this would render the government of this country extremely easy; for, in fact, the difficulties of administration hitherto have arisen rather from supporting the present ruinous system, than from any opposition that has been made to the necessary measures of government. It was the vices of this existing system that has driven the public mind into a state of agitation: if they were suffered to pore longer over those vices, it would be impossible, in times like these, to foresee what follies they might adopt. Being of this mind, I shall certainly vote for it".

From the early part of 1793, it is evident a revolution was looked to, for reform and Catholic emancipation, and that some of the principal leaders looked for something more than either.

At a meeting of the society in February, 1793, the Hon. Simon Butler in the chair, Oliver Bond secretary, a declaration was proposed and adopted by the meeting, pronouncing the proceedings of the Secret Committee of the House of Lords appointed to inquire into the recent disturbances, in compelling witnesses to answer interrogatories on oath, compromising themselves, and directed principally to the discovery of evidence in support of prosecutions already commenced, to be illegal. For this offence Messrs. Butler and Bond were subsequently brought to the bar of the House of Lords; and on admitting the declaration to have been put from the chair and carried at the meeting in question, the judgment of the house was pronounced by the Lord Chancellor, each of the prisoners to be imprisoned for six months, and to pay a fine of £500 to the King.

Extracts from Address of Society of United Irishmen of Dublin, to the Irish Nation.

William Drennan, Chairman.
Archibald Hamilton Rowan, Secretary.

"January, 27th, 1793.

"It is our right and our duty at this time, and at all times, to communicate our opinion to the public, whatever may be its success; and under the protection of a free press, itself protected by a jury, judges of law as well as fact, we will never be afraid to speak freely what we freely think, appealing for the purity of our intentions to the world; and as far as these intentions are manifested by word, writing, and action, appealing to the justness of our cause and the judgment of our country.

"On the 9th of November, 1791, was this society founded. We and our beloved brethren of Belfast first began that civic union, which, if a nation be a society united for mutual advantage, has made Ireland a nation; and at a time when all wished, many willed, and few spoke, and fewer acted, we, Catholics and Protestants, joined our hands and our hearts together, sunk every distinctive appellation in the name Irishman, and in the presence of God, devoted ourselves to universal enfranchisement and a real representation of all the people in parliament. On this rock of right our little ark found a resting-place; gradually, though not slowly, throughout the country, other stations of safety appeared, and what before was agitated, became firm and fertile land. From that time have the body and spirit of our societies increased, until selfish corporations, sunk into conscious insignificance, have given way to a grand incorporation of the Irish people.

"We have, in our digest of the penal laws, addressed ourselves successfully to the good sense, humanity, and generous indignation of all Ireland, convincing public reason, alarming public conscience, and holding up this collection of bloody fragments as a terrible memorial of government without justice, and of legality without constitution. It has been our rule and our practice never to enter into compromise or composition with a noxious principle, and we have therefore set our face and lifted our voice against this persecuting and pusillanimous code, as against the murderer of our brother, eager to erase the whole of it from the statute-book as it erased our countrymen from the state, and wishing to proscribe such an incongruous and monstrous conjunction of terms as Penal Law, not only from a digest of the laws, but from the dictionary of the language.

"It has appeared our duty in times such as these, when the head is nothing without the heart, and with men such as we oppose, not only to write and speak, but to act and suffer; to reckon nothing hazardous, provided it was necessary; to come forward with the intrepidity which a good cause inspires and a backward people required; in going far ourselves to make others to follow faster, though all the time conjuring us to retreat; in short, to make the retrograde stationary, and the stationary progressive; to quicken the dead, and add a soul to the living.

"Knowing that what the tongue is to the man, the press is to the people, though nearly blasted in our cradle by the sorcery of solicitors of law and general attorneys, we have persisted with courageous perseverance to rally around this forlorn hope of freedom, and to maintain this citadel of the constitution at the risk of personal security, property, and all that was dear to us. They have come to us with a writ and a warrant and an ex-officio information, but we have come to them in the name of the genius of the British constitution and the majesty of the people of Ireland. Is sedition against the officers of administration to exercise the criminal jurisdiction of the country, and is sedition against the people to walk by with arrogant impunity?

"We have defended the violated liberty of the subject against the undefined and voracious privilege of the House of Commons, treating with merited scorn the insolent menaces of men inflated with office; and not only have we maintained the rights of the people at the bar of this branch of the legislature, but we have, at the bench of judicature, vindicated the right of the nation, its real independence and supremacy; demonstrating that general inviolability was made transmissible to one or many deputies, to the utter extinction of responsibility—the evasion of criminality, and that the executive power of imperial and independent Ireland was merely a dangling appendage to the great seal of Great Britain. Not a man so low that, if oppressed by an assumption of power, civil or military, has not met with our counsel, our purse, and our protection; not a man so high, that if acting contrary to popular right or public independence, we have not denounced at the judgment seat of justice and at the equitable tribunal of public opinion.

"We have encountered much calumny. We have, among a thousand contradictory epithets, been called republicans and levellers, as if, by artfully making the terms appear synonymous, their nature could be made the same; as if a republican were a leveller, or a leveller a republican; as if the only leveller was not the despot who crushes with an iron sceptre every rank and degree of society into one; as if republican or democratic energy was not—as well as aristocratical privilege or regal prerogative— sanctioned by

the fundamental principles of the constitution, by all those memorable precedents which form its first features, and by which the just and virtuous struggles of our ancestors, recognized by successive generations, point out to their posterity when they ought to interpose, and how long they ought to suffer. In his words, whose name rests unknown, but whose fame is immortal,* we desire 'that the constitution may preserve its monarchical form, but we would have the manners of the people purely and strictly republican'. Are you not sensible that this cry of republicanism, as the clamour against Catholic delegation, has been raised and prolonged by the mischievous malignity of the lowest gossips of government, merely to drown the general voice for reform, like the state manœuvre which ordered a flourish of trumpets and alarm of drums at the side of suffering patriots, when they wished to address themselves to the reason and justice of the people? But we will speak, and you will hear. Yes, countrymen, we do desire that extended liberty which may allow you, as citizens, to do what you will, provided you do not injure another, or rather to do all the good you can to others without doing injustice to yourself. Yes, countrymen, we do wish for an equality of rights, which is constitutional; not an equality of property, which is impossible. Yes, countrymen, we do long for another equality, and we hope yet to see it realized—an equality consisting in the power of every father of a family to acquire by labour either of mind or body, something beyond a mere subsistence, some little capital, to prove, in case of sickness, old age, or misfortune, a safeguard for his body and for his soul; a hallowed hoard that may lift him above the hard necessity which struggles between conscience and corruption; that may keep his heart whole and his spirit erect, while his body bends beneath its burden; make him fling away the wages of venality, and proudly return to a humble home, where a constitution that looks alike on the palace and the hovel, may stand at his hearth a tutelar divinity, and spread the ægis of equal law to guard him from the revenge of those who offered the bribe, and offered it in vain.

"We have addressed the friends of the people in England, and have received their concurrence, their thanks, and their gratulation. We have addressed the Volunteers. Deliverers of this injured land, have we done wrong? if we have, tear your colours from the staff, reverse your arms, muffle your drums, beat a funeral march for Ireland, and then abandon the corpse to fensibles, to militia, to invalids, and dismounted dragoons. If we have not done wrong,—and we swear by the revolution of '82 that we have not—go on with

* Junius.

the zeal of enterprising virtue, and a sense of your own importance, to exercise that right of self-defence which belongs to the nation, and to infuse constitutional energy into the public will for the public good.

"We address your understanding—the common sense of the common weal—and we ask you, is it not a truth, that where the people do not participate in the legislature by a delegation of representatives, freely, fairly, and frequently elected, there can be no public liberty. Is it not the fact that in this country there is no representative legislature, because the people are not represented in the legislature, and have no partnership in the constitution. If it be the principle of the constitution, that it is the right of every commoner in this realm to have a vote in the election of his representative, and that without such vote, no man can be actually represented, it is our wish, in that case, to renovate that constitution, and to revive its suspended animation, by giving free motion and full play to its vital principle. If, on the other hand, the constitution does not fully provide for an impartial and adequate representation of all the people; if it be more exclusive than inclusive in its nature; if it be a monopoly, a privilege, or a prerogative; in that case it is our desire to alter it; for what is the constitution to us if we are as nothing to the constitution? Is the constitution made for you, or you for it? If the people do not constitute a part of it, what is it to them more than the ghost of Alfred? and what are principles without practice, which they hear and read, to practice without principles, which they see and feel?" etc.*

House of Lords.

Friday, March 1, 1793.

The Honourable Simon Butler and Mr. Oliver Bond appeared at the bar in pursuance of their summonses.

Lord Mountjoy proposed that the following paper, which he had read on the night preceding, and which had the names of the persons at the bar prefixed to it, should be submitted to their inspection.

"United Irishmen of Dublin.

"Hon. Simon Butler, Chairman.
"Oliver Bond, Secretary.

"24th February, 1793.

"When a committee of secrecy was first appointed by the House of Lords to inquire into the causes of the risings in certain counties of this kingdom, although this society well

* The above was written by Dr. Drennan.

foresaw the danger of abuse to which such an institution was subject, yet it was restrained from expressing that opinion, by the utility of the professed object, and by the hope that the presence and advice of the two first judicial officers of this country would prevent that committee from doing those illegal acts, which less informed men might in such a situation commit.

"But since it has thought fit to change itself from a committee to inquire into the risings in certain counties of this kingdom, into an inquisition to scrutinize the private principles and secret thoughts of individuals; since it has not confined itself to simple inquiries and voluntary informations, but has assumed the right and exercised the power of compelling attendance and enforcing answers upon oath to personal interrogatories tending to criminate the party examined; since its researches are not confined to the professed purposes of its institution, but directed principally to the discovery of evidence in support of prosecutions hitherto commenced, and utterly unconnected with the cause of the tumults it was appointed to investigate; since in its proceedings it has violated well-ascertained principles of law, this society feels itself compelled to warn the public mind, and point the public attention to the following observations :—

"That the House of Lords can act only in a legislative or judicial capacity.

"That in its legislative capacity it has no authority to administer an oath.

"That in its judicial capacity it has a right to administer an oath; but that capacity extends only to error and appeal, except in cases of impeachment and trial of a peer, in which alone the House of Lords exercises an original jurisdiction.

"That the House of Lords, as a court, has no right to act by delegation.

"That the committee of secrecy possesses no authority but what it derives by delegation from the House of Lords.

"That as the House of Lords does not possess any jurisdiction in the subject matter referred to the committee; and as, even if it did, it could not delegate the same, it necessarily follows that the committee has not judical authority, and cannot administer an oath.

"That even if the committee of secrecy acted as a court, its proceedings ought not to be secret.

"That no court has a right to exhibit personal interrogatories upon oath, the answers to which may criminate the party examined, except at the desire of the party, and with a view to purge him from a contempt.

"That it was the principal vice of the courts High of Commission and Star Chamber, to examine upon personal

interrogatories, to convict the party examined; and that those courts were abolished because their proceedings were illegal, unconstitutional, and oppressive".

Adjutant General's Office, June 4th, 1798.

NOTICE.

IN Caſe of any Alarm during the dark Nights, the Inhabitants are hereby commanded immediately to place Lights in the Windows of the Middle Floors of their Houſes. All Perſons neglecting to comply with this Notice will be puniſhed.

By Order of Lieut. Gen. LAKE,

GEO. HEWETT,
Adjutant-General.

DUBLIN Printed by GEORGE GRIERSON, Printer to the KING's Moſt Excellent Majeſty.

Order to the Citizens of Dublin, issued by General Lake, June 4th, 1798.

This paper was accordingly delivered into the hands of Mr. Butler, by the gentleman usher; after he had seen it he was asked by Lord Mountjoy if that paper, bearing his name, was printed by his directions or authority.

Mr. Butler said, that the paper contained a declaration of the Society of United Irishmen of the city of Dublin, and bore date the 24th of February, 1793, that he presided at the meeting; that as chairman, he put the question on the several paragraphs, according as they were handed to him by the committee which had been appointed to prepare them; that he was then, and is still, satisfied that every paragraph of that declaration was agreeable to law and the principles of the constitution.

Lord Mountjoy said that Mr. Butler had not yet answered whether he authorized the publication.

Mr. Butler replied, that he meant to give the fullest information on the subject; he did authorize the publication, he authorized it in common with every individual of the society.

Mr. Bond was then interrogated. He was asked whether he had signed the paper: he replied that neither he nor Mr. Butler had signed the paper. The resolutions of the society are referred to the committee of correspondence for publication. The committee cause the names of the chairman and secretary to be prefixed to every publication. That as secretary he delivered this declaration to the committee of correspondence. And, on being asked by Lord Clonmel whether he delivered it to the committee for the purpose of publication, and whether he thereby authorized the publication, he replied in the affirmative.

The Lord Chancellor then asked Mr. Butler whether he had anything further to add. Mr. Butler said, that he attended to answer questions: that if his lordship had any questions to ask, he (Mr. Butler) was ready to answer.

Mr. Butler and Mr. Bond were ordered to withdraw, but not to leave the house.

They were shortly afterwards again ordered to the bar, and the following resolutions, agreed to by the House in their absence, having been read, viz.:—

"That the said paper was a false, scandalous, and seditious libel; a high breach of the privileges of this House, tending to disturb the public peace, and questioning the authority of this High Court of Parliament.

"That Simon Butler and Oliver Bond having confessed that they had authorized the same to be printed, should be taken into custody".

They were committed to the custody of the gentleman usher, and ordered to withdraw in such custody.

In some time afterwards they were brought to the bar in custody of the gentleman usher.

The Lord Chancellor, after reciting the foregoing resolutions, spoke to the following purport: "Simon Butler and Oliver Bond, you were called to the bar to answer for a libel on this High Court of Parliament; you have confessed that such libel, which, for its presumption, ignorance, and mischievous tendency, is unprecedented, was printed by your authority. You, Simon Butler, cannot plead ignorance in extenuation; your noble birth, your education, the honourable profession to which you belong, his Majesty's gown, which you wear, and to which you now stand a disgrace, gave you the advantages of knowledge, and are strong circumstances of aggravation of your guilt. It remains for me to pronounce the judgment of the house, which is, that you Simon Butler and Oliver Bond, be imprisoned for six months in the gaol of Newgate; that each of you pay a fine to the king of £500; and that you are not to be discharged from your confinement till such fine be paid".

They were taken from the bar, and in a short time after conveyed in a coach to Newgate, under the escort of fifty or sixty soldiers, and directions of Alderman Warren.

Extract from Address of United Irishmen to the People of Ireland.

Beauchamp Bagenel Harvey, Chairman.
Thomas Russell, Secretary.

"March 3, 1793.

"We have often addressed you in your cause; suffer us for once to address you in our own. Two of the officers of our society have been thrown into a common prison for the discharge of their duty. A procedure so extraordinary demands that we should lay before you the whole of that conduct which has brought upon the society so strong an exertion of power.

"The Society of United Irishmen was formed in November, 1791. Their principles, their motives, and their objects, were set forth in their Declaration and their Test. At that period the spirit of this nation was at the lowest ebb; the great religious sects were disunited; the Protestants were disheartened and sunk by the memorable defeat of their convention in 1783; the Catholics, without allies or supporters, accustomed to look to administration alone for relief, dared scarcely aspire to hope for the lowest degree of emancipation, and even that hope was repelled with contumely and disdain; administration was omnipotent, opposition was feeble, and the people were—nothing.

"Such was the situation of Ireland, when in Belfast and in Dublin two societies were formed for the purpose of effectuating an union of the religious sects and a parliamentary reform. From the instant of their formation a new era commenced; the public has been roused from their stupor, the ancient energy of the land is again called forth, and the people seem determined, in the spirit of 1782, to demand and to obtain their long-lost rights.

"The first measure of the United Irishmen was, a declaration in favour of the full and complete emancipation of the Catholics. What was the consequence? The moment that great and oppressed body saw itself supported by a single ally, they spurned the vile subjection in which they had been so long held, and with the heavy yoke of the penal laws yet hanging on their necks, they summoned their representatives from the four provinces of the kingdom, and with the determined voice of millions, they called upon their

sovereign for a total abolition of that abominable and bloody code: a code, the extent and severity of which was first made known by a report set forth by this society, and compiled by the knowledge and industry of that man who is now the victim of his disinterested patriotism, and who, in publishing to the world the abominations of intolerance, bigotry, and persecution, has committed a sin against corruption which can never be forgiven.

"If the knowledge of that penal code has been useful—if the complete union of the religious sects has been beneficial—if the emancipation of Catholics be good for Ireland—then may this society claim some merit and some support from their countrymen.

"In 1791, there was not a body of men in Ireland that ventured to speak, or scarce to think, of reform. The utmost length that patriots of that day went, was to attack a few of the outworks of corruption: the societies of United Irishmen stormed her in the citadel. They did not fritter down the public spirit, or distract the public attention by a variety of petty measures; they were not afraid to clip the wings of peculation too close, or to cut up the trade of parliament by the roots. They demanded a parliamentary reform, and what has been the consequence? The cry has been re-echoed from county to county, and from province to province, till every honest man in the nation has become ardent in the pursuit, and even the tardy and lingering justice of parliament has been forced into a recognition of the principle. If, then, reform be good for Ireland, this society, which first renewed the pursuit of that great object, may claim some merit and some support from their countrymen.

"At the opening of this session every man thought that the unanimous wish of the nation on the two great questions must be gratified—that the Catholics must be completely emancipated, and a radical reform in parliament effectuated: but this delusion was soon removed. It was suddenly discovered that it was necessary to have a strong government in Ireland; a war was declared against France, ruinous to the rising prosperity of this country; 20,000 regular troops, and 16,000 militia were voted, and the famous gunpowder bill passed, by the unanimous consent of all parties in parliament; the Society of United Irishmen, a vigilant sentinel for the public good, warned their countrymen of the danger impending over their liberty and their commerce. They knew in doing so they were exposing themselves to the fury of government; but they disregarded their own private safety when the good of their country was at stake. They could not hope to stop these measures, for they had no power; but what they could, they did; they

lodged their solemn protest against them before the great tribunal of the nation.

"In the progress of the present session, it was thought necessary by the House of Lords to establish a secret committee, to investigate the cause of tne disturbances now existing in a few counties in this kingdom. The examination of several individuals having transpired, the Society of United Irishmen felt it their duty to step forward again, and to give such information to their countrymen as might be necessary for their guidance. They stated a few plain principles, which they did then and do now conceive to be sound constitutional law; but now the measure of their offences was full, and the heavy hand of power, so long withheld, was to fall with treble weight upon their heads. Their chairman, the Hon. Simon Butler, and their secretary, Mr. Oliver Bond, were summoned before the House of Lords; they were called upon to avow or disavow the publication: they avowed it at once with the spirit and magnanimity of men who deserved to be free. For this, they have been sentenced, with a severity unexampled in the parliamentary annals of this country, to be imprisoned in Newgate for six months, and to pay a fine of £500 each, and to remain in prison until the said fines be paid. By this sentence, two gentlemen, one of noble birth, of great talents, and elevated situation in an honourable profession; the other a merchant of the fairest character, the highest respectability, and in great and extensive business, are torn away from their families and connexions, carried through the streets with a military guard, and plunged like felons into the common gaol, where they are in an instant confined among the vilest malefactors, the dross and scum of the Earth, and this sentence was pronounced by a body, who are at once judges and parties—who measure the offence, proportion the punishment, and from whose sentence there lies no appeal.

"We do not mention here criminal prosecutions, instituted against several of our members in the courts of law, for publishing and distributing our address to the Volunteers of Ireland; respect for the existing laws of our country imposes upon us a silence which no provocation shall induce us to break; we know when juries intervene that justice will be done.

"Such is the history of the society, and such are the enormities which have drawn upon them the persecution under which they now labour. Their prime offence is their devoted attachment to reform; an attachment which, in the eyes of a bad administration, includes all political sin; their next offence is an ardent wish for a complete and total, not a partial and illusory, emancipation of the Catholics; their next offence is having published a strong censure on the impending ruinous war, on the militia and gunpowder acts;

and, finally, the crowning offence, for which those officers now lie in gaol, by order of the House of Lords, is having instructed their countrymen in what they conceive to be the law of the land, for the guidance of those who might be summoned before the secret committee", etc.

United Irishmen of Dublin.

Henry Sheares, President.
Edward Joseph Lewins, Secretary.

Address to their Catholic Countrymen.

"June 7, 1793.

"FELLOW-CITIZENS,

"We hasten to recognize, under this new and endearing title, a people tried by experience and schooled by adversity; who have signalized their loyalty amidst all the rigours of the law; who have proved their fidelity to a constitution which, with respect to them, violated all its own principles; and who have set an example of patient perdurance in religious faith, while for a century they experienced a persecution equally abhorrent from every maxim of good government and every principle of genuine Christianity. We congratulate our country on such a large addition to the public domain of mind, the cultivation and produce of which may in some degree compensate for past waste and negligence. We congratulate the empire that the loss of three millions across the Atlantic is supplied by the timely acquisition of the same number at home. We congratulate the constitution that new life is transfused into its veins at a period of decay and decrepitude; and we trust that the heroism which suffered with such constancy for the sake of religion, will now change into a heroism that shall act with equal steadiness and consistency for the freedom, the honour, and the independence of this country.

"By the wise benevolence of the sovereign, by the enlightened spirit of the times—by the union of religious persuasions for the good of civil society—by the spirit, prudence, and consistency of the Catholic Committee, who, during their whole existence, were true to the trust reposed in them, and whose last breath sanctified the expediency and necessity of a parliamentary reform—by these causes, along with other fortunate coincidences you have been admitted into the outer court of the constitution. Look around you—but without superstitious awe or idolatrous prostration, for the edifice you enter is not a temple, but a dwelling. Enter, therefore, with erect heads, and yet with grateful hearts; grateful to your king—grateful to your country; attached

to the constitution by manly principle, not by childish prejudice; faithful to your friends through every change, either of their fortune or your own; and if not forgetful of the virulence of your enemies, having always the magnanimity to pity and to despise them.

"Loving the constitution rationally, not devoted merely to its infirmities—loving it too well to dote upon its abuses, you must shortly be sensible that, without reform, the balance of the elective franchise will be more off the centre than before, the inequality of popular representation more glaring and monstrous, the disproportion more enormous between the number of electors in thirty-two counties and that in the boroughs from which you are excluded. What was kept close and corrupt before will be close and corrupt still; common right will still be private property, and the constitution will be imprisoned under the lock and key of corporations. The era of your enfranchisement will therefore eventually work the weal or woe of Ireland. We do trust that you will not be incorporated merely with the body of the constitution without adding to its spirit. You are called into citizenship not to sanction abuse, but to discountenance it; not to accumulate corruption, but to meliorate manners and infuse into society purer practice and sounder morality; always separating, in thought and action, misgovernment and maladministration from the good sense and right reason natural to and coeval with the constitution, and always remembering that nothing can be good for any part of the nation which has not for its object the interest of the whole.

"Fellow-citizens!—We speak to you with much earnestness of affection, repeating, with sincerest pleasure, that tender and domestic appellation which binds us into one people. But what is it which has lately made and must keep us one? Not the soil we inhabit, not the language we use, but our singleness of sentiment respecting one great political truth, our indivisible union on the main object of general interest—a parliamentary reform. This is the civic faith for which this society exists, and for which it suffers under a persecution that still, as of old, savage in its nature, though somewhat smoother in its form, wreaks its mighty vengeance on person and property, or exerts its puny malice to ruin us in the professions by which we live, merely for an undaunted adherence to a single good and glorious principle, which has always animated our publications and will always regulate our practice. We conjure you, in the most solemn manner, to remember, with the respect due to such authority, the last words, the political will and testament of a body of men who have deserved so well of their constituents and of their country. Never forget them—never forsake them! Let this principle of reform live in

your practice, and give energy to the new character you are about to sustain, for the glory or the disgrace of Ireland", etc.

The Society of United Irishmen, Dublin, to the People of Ireland.

Henry Sheares, President.
William Levingston Webb, Secretary.

"June 21st, 1793.

"When the present war first threatened this nation with the calamities under which it has since groaned, and by which it is at this moment almost overwhelmed, we warned you of the approaching danger, and sought by a timely caution to avert the consequent ruin. We told you it was a measure fraught with destruction to your infant manufactures, to your growing commerce, and to your almost mature spirit. How far the prediction we then uttered has been justified by the event, let the surrounding miseries of this country determine:—an expiring and nearly extinguished credit, the pride of commerce humbled and disgraced, the cries of famine re-echoed through increasing thousands of your manufacturers, discarded from the exercise of their honest labour, driven into penury and inaction, and compelled to seek an uncertain subsistence from the humanity of their more affluent, though less industrious fellow-citizens. Such are the effects, and such were the predicted consequences, of a war commenced without provocation, and which, if suffered to continue a few months longer, must inevitably produce national shame, national bankruptcy, and national destruction.

"We declared that the persecution of principles was the real object of the war, whatever pretexts may be laid out. Judge of this assertion also by the event. Behold the external invasion against liberty seconded by internal outrages on your most valued rights; behold your band of patriots, once embodied and exulting in the glorious cause of freedom—once the pride of Ireland, and the admiration of attentive Europe—your Volunteers, now insulted and disarmed; behold your loved, your revered, your idolized palladium, the trial by jury, profaned and violated—trampled in the dust by the unhallowed foot of undefined privilege; behold your faithful friends, for daring to step forward in your defence, dragged to a loathsome prison, and loaded with every injury which falsehood and tyranny could suggest.

"What has been the case? Although the war has yet existed but a few months, its dire effects have already

pierced the very marrow of society. Those, indeed, who advised to plunge you into all its horrors have not suffered the slightest inconveniencies: but is there an artificer of any description, a manufacturer of any denomination, a single Irishman who lives by his honest industry, who has not wholly or in part been deprived of his means of sustenance? All export is destroyed except the export of specie, wrung from the hard hand of labour to pamper the luxury of absentees. Every trade is suspended, except the trade of corruption, which flourishes by the impoverishment of this devoted soil.

"Assemble in your parishes, in your towns, in your counties, and in your provinces; there speak forth your sentiments, and let your will be known. With the firm voice of injured millions require a peace; pursue the example of the Catholic Convention--unite order with spirit, tranquillity with action. Like them, carry your wishes to the throne itself, and fear not for their success; but like them, whilst you seek a remedy for your present sufferings, ever remember that a radical reform in the system of representation is the only means of avoiding a repetition of them. Call on your king to chain down the monster war, which has devoured your commerce, which gorges its hateful appetite by preying on the wretchedness of your manufacturers, and enslaving them for life, the instruments of tyranny and slaughter; call on him to spurn from his councils those who shall assert that you are bound to rob and to be robbed, to murder and to be murdered, to inflict and to endure all the complicated miseries of war, because an unfeeling policy should dictate the horrid act; call on him to give you peace", etc.

Address of the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin.

John Sheares, Chairman.
W. L. Webb, Secretary.

"16th August, 1793.

"To the Hon. Simon Butler and Oliver Bond, Esq.

"GENTLEMEN, our dear and respected Friends!

"On the first of March we saw you enter into prison, with an air and manner that testified not only a serene and settled conviction in the justice of your cause, but a cheerful confidence in your own fortitude to sustain all the consequences that an attachment to this cause might bring upon you: and we now see you, after an imprisonment of

six months, come out with the same unbending spirit; in the same health of body; with the same alacrity of mind; both preserved sound and unaltered, probably from the same cause—that vital energy which a sense of unmerited suffering and the consciousness of doing our duty never fail to communicate. It is this conscious sense of unmerited injury that refreshes the soul amidst the closest confinement, blows up the spark of life, and invigorates both the head and the heart; this, which made Mirabeau write for liberty in a dungeon, while his enemies conspired against it in the ante-chamber; this, which expanded the soul of Raleigh, gave it power to wander at large, and, in spite of bars, in defiance of gaolers, to leave the narrow cell where his body lay, and write for posterity, a "History of the World".

"Notwithstanding the irresistible argument of six months' imprisonment in a common gaol, we are still inclined to lament that the law and custom of parliament should ever have entered into a contest with the liberty of the press and the rights of the people, and that a discretionary power of punishment should so often supersede the ordinary course of criminal jurisdiction and the sacred trial by jury. We continue still inclined to believe that all undefined and irresponsible power, by whatever person or body assumed, is in its nature despotic, and that the vigilance of the people and the censorship of the press are the only means of guarding against its deadening influence, and preserving those barriers which the spirit of free government ought to place between the legislative, executive, and judiciary departments. We still think that particular and anxious care ought to be taken, never to mingle and confound the legislative and judicial powers, for the conjunction is politically incestuous, and the production is always a monster.

"Gentlemen, your country is much your debtor. But we must suppose you by this time too well experienced in the mutability of public opinion, to expect that she will for the present acknowledge the debt, much less return the obligation; that she will either sympathise with what you have suffered or partake in our heartfelt joy at your enlargement. Indeed, you will scarcely now know your country, in a few months so much altered. Indisposed to condole or to congratulate, desponding without reason, exhausted without effort, she sits on the ground in a fit of mental alienation, unconscious of her real malady, scared at every whisper; her thousand ears open for falsehoods from abroad, her thousand eyes shut against the truth at home; worked up by false suggestions and artful insinuations to such a madness of suspicion as makes her mistake her dearest friends for her deadliest foes, and revile the only

society which ever pursued her welfare with spirit and perseverance, as attempting at her life with the torch of an incendiary and the dagger of an assassin.

"From a public, thus inquisitive about the affairs of other people, thus incurious about its own, thus deluded—we were going to say, in language of high authority, thus besotted—we appeal for your fame, and our own justification, to the same public, in a more collected, a more sober, a more dignified moment; when the perishable politics of party in place and party out of place, shall have passed away like the almanack of the year; when the light shall break in on an underworking family compact, whose business it has been to conceal the real situation and sentiments of this country from the immediate councils of the sovereign; when a compromising, parleying, panic-struck opposition, negociating without authority, surrendering without condition, shall repent of their pusillanimous credulity; and when the nation shall dare to acknowledge as a truth, what in its conscience it feels as a fact, that those only are her friends who stand up while all are prostrate around them, and call aloud on ministry and on opposition for reform, radical, comprehensive, immediate; such as will nationalize liberty, and make this country cease to be what it has been well described, 'a heavy-handed, unfeeling aristocracy over a people ferocious and rendered desperate by poverty and wretchedness'. But if such a time should not soon arrive—if this country should remain still abused and contented, there is a world elsewhere. Wherever freedom is, there is our country, and there ought to be our home. Let this government take care. Let them think of depopulation, and tremble. Who makes the rich ?—the poor. What makes the shuttle fly, and the plough cleave the furrows ?—the poor. Should the poor emigrate, what would become of you, proud, powerful, silly men ? What would become of you if the ears of corn should wither on the stalk, and the labours of the loom should cease ? Who would feed you then, if hungry, or clothe you when naked ? Give the poor a country, or you will lose one yourselves. Mankind, like other commodities, will follow the demand, and, if depreciated here below all value, will fly to a better market.

"Gentlemen, we again salute you with great respect and affection, as friends and brothers. We salute you, in the unity of an honest and an honourable cause. May you receive the reward of your sufferings, and triumph in the freedom of your country".

The Honourable Simon Butler and Oliver Bond, Esq., returned an answer, from which the following extract is taken :—

"We received the honour of your spirited and affectionate address with equal pride and gratitude. You have done justice to the feelings which have supported us under our imprisonment; and, if our situation required adventitious consolation, the patriotic attention of our numerous friends has most amply supplied it. Our sufferings have not warped our understandings; and we still think that we only discharge an indispensable duty while we treat all public topics with free discussion, preserving a due respect for the public peace and the laws of the land. We will only boast of our constitution when it knows no power which is not responsible. Prerogative, founded upon the salutary maxim that the king can do no wrong, held forth at all times some relief in the responsibility of the minister; but privilege, which arrogates to itself a like constitutional principle, precludes all resource whatsoever against its illegal or arbitrary exercise; acknowledging no control, no corrective, it regards not the forms of law; and while it remains undefined and irresponsible, there is no safety in the land. We have thought it our duty to seek redress, but we sought it in vain. We have not even received countenance in the quarter where the nation might have looked for support. We have not, however, submitted; we have suffered", etc.

For distributing the address of the United Irishmen to the Volunteers, A. H. Rowan, in January, 1794, was prosecuted for a seditious libel, sentenced to two years' imprisonment, and a fine of £500.

It is to be noted that the seditious libel was uttered in the year 1792 and the prosecution did not take place till the year 1794. It was at this celebrated trial that Curran made a speech never to be forgotten in Ireland and parts of which furnish specimens of oratory more widely diffused in England and America, and more frequently cited, than any passages in the appeals of orators dead or living. One passage in that speech is better remembered and more generally admired than any separate portion of an address ever delivered at the bar in either country—that wherein he refers to the words included in the libel, "Universal emancipation". "I speak in the spirit of British law, which makes liberty commensurate with and inseparable from British soil; which proclaims even to the stranger and the sojourner, the moment he sets his foot upon British earth, that the ground on which he treads is holy, and consecrated by the genius of universal emancipation. No matter in what language his doom may have been pronounced; no matter what complexion incompatible with freedom an Indian or an African sun may have burnt upon him; no matter in what disastrous battle his liberty may have been

cloven down; no matter with what solemnities he may have been devoted upon the altar of slavery; the first moment he touches the sacred soil of Britain, the altar and the god sink together in the dust, his soul walks abroad in her own majesty, his body swells beyond the measure of his chains that burst from around him, and he stands redeemed, regenerated, and disenthralled by the irresistible genius of universal emancipation".

The postponement of the trial was attributed, and not without justice, by Mr. Rowan and his friends, to the arrangements required for the new plan that had been devised of securing a conviction, in cases similar to the present, through the medium of packed juries, by the intervention of hirelings of government placed in the office of sheriffs. This matter it was found impossible to accomplish before the early part of the year 1794, when one Jenkins, and that Cimmerian zealot, John Gifford, were thrust into the shrievalty. But this trial not only exhibited the adoption of the new jury-packing system—a darker feature was also presented, in the employment of wretches without character or credit to act as witnesses.

On Rowan's trial, a disreputable and a worthless man, of the name of Lyster, was the principal witness against the accused. His evidence of Rowan's having distributed the libellous paper was false; it was declared to be so by Rowan himself at the trial; and the able and enlightened editor of his autobiography, the Rev. Dr. Drummond, states that Rowan was not the man who distributed the libel on the occasion sworn to, but a person of the name of Willis, a skinner, formerly a member of the Volunteer association.*

It would be now useless to refer to this fact, but that it shows the influence which the recourse to packed juries, and the employment of perjured witnesses, had on the minds of the people, and especially on the conduct of their leaders, at this period. So long as the fountains of justice were believed to be even moderately pure—so long as it was unknown that they were poisoned at their very source, there were some bounds to the popular discontent. The language of the liberals of that day might be bold, violent, and intemperate—not more so, nay, not so much so, as the language used with impunity at political societies in the present day; but the people still had privileges and advantages to lose by sedition, and the most valuable of all

* Hamilton Rowan, Dr. Drummond states, was mistaken by the informer Lyster for a man of the name of Willis, who had distributed the printed paper for which he (Rowan) was prosecuted. But Benjamin Binns, one well acquainted with the events of that period, informed me this statement was an error—that the paper in question was distributed by his brother, Alderman Binns, now of Philadelphia.

was the trial by jury, which had now, in public opinion, ceased to be a safeguard or a security to the people.

Dublin Caſtle, 8th September, 1798.

ADVICES have been received this Evening from Head Quarters at *Carrick on Shannon,* by which it appears that the Enemy had paſſed through *Manor Hamilton,* and croſſed the *Shannon* at *Ballintra.* They threw away eight Guns and two Tumbrils in their March, and many of the Inhabitants who had joined, were deſerting them. General *Lake* was following them with his Corps. His Excellency was marching upon *Mohill.*

A Body of Inſurgents having collected near *Granard,* on *Wedneſday* laſt, ſeveral Yeoman Corps in the Neighbourhood, and from the County of *Cavan,* commanded by Captain *Cottingham,* collected with Celerity, and entirely defeated the Inſurgents at the Town of *Granard,* killing about One Hundred and Fifty, and diſperſing the Remainder. The Yeomanry experienced no Loſs.

On the ſame Evening Lord *Longford,* at the Head of a Body of Yeomanry, aſſiſted by a Detachment of the King's Troops, attacked a Body of Rebels at *Wilſon's Hoſpital,* and put them to Flight, with much Slaughter.

DUBLIN: Printed by GEORGE GRIERSON, Printer to the KING's Moſt Excellent Majeſty.

Bulletin issued by the Castle Authorities in September, 1798.

The Society of United Irishmen, on the 7th February, 1794, presented an address to Mr. Rowan, then undergoing the sentence of imprisonment in Newgate, in which, after

expressing the obligations the country was under to him for his bold assertion of its rights, and its sympathy with his sufferings in its cause, the society observed: "Although corruption has been leagued with falsehood to misrepresent and vilify this society, we have reposed in honest confidence on the consoling reflection, that we should at all times find an impregnable barrier in 'the trial by jury,' wherein character and intention should be regarded as unerring guides to justice. But while we have been earnestly endeavouring to establish the constitutional rights of our country, we suddenly find ourselves at a loss for this first and last stake of a free people; for the trial by jury loses its whole value when the sheriff or the panel is under the influence of interest, prejudice, or delusion, and that battery which liberty and wisdom united to construct for the security of the people, is turned against them. However, in defiance of that system of proscription, which is no longer confined to a particular persuasion, but which visits with vengeance every effort in the cause of freedom, we trust you are assured of our inflexible determination to pursue the great object of our association—an equal and impartial representation of the people in parliament—an object from which no chance or change, no slander, no persecution, no oppression, shall deter us".

In 1794 the violence of the language, and the publicity with which the daring proceedings of the United Irishmen were carried on, brought the vengeance of government on their society. On the 4th of May, their ordinary place of meeting, the Tailors' Hall, in Back Lane, was attacked by the police, their meeting dispersed, and their papers seized.*

* The Tailors' Hall, in Back Lane, had become the arena of liberal and democratic politics, and also of the agitation of the Roman Catholic question, at the old Tholsel had previously been of national and corporate struggles. The Tholsel, a part of the facade of which only remains, was erected in 1683; it derived its name from the toll-stall, where the impost on goods received into the city was taken. It was situate in Nicholas Street, near Christ Church. In 1703 the city of Dublin gave a grand entertainment in the Tholsel to the Duke and Duchess of Ormond, when the "corporations marched through the city to the banquet, with their several pageants". Here the lord mayor, aldermen, and commons transacted their business, and the merchants met on 'change in a spacious hall in the upper part of the building. In 1779, a meeting was held in the Tholsel, at which resolutions were passed "against the use of English manufacturers till the grievances were redressed". James Napper Tandy took the foremost part in the proceedings of this meeting.

The Tholsel, as the corporation waxed more loyal, ceased to be the Crown and Anchor of the popular party. The Tailors' Hall was the first public place of rendezvous of the Roman Catholic Committee, and it became the theatre of the earliest performances of the United Kingdom. From the meetings of both bodies it acquired the name of the Back Lane Parliament. James Napper Tandy, as "a patriot" and an alderman, figured for a time at both places; but when "the alderman of Skinners' Alley" quarrelled with their democratic brother, the Back Lane Parliament became the sole arena of Tandy's ground and lofty "patriotic tumblings". R. R. M.

The leaders had been successively prosecuted and imprisoned; many of the timid and more prudent part of the members seceded from the society; the more determined and indignant, and especially the republican portion of the body, remained, and in 1795 gave a new character to the association, still called the "Society of United Irishmen". The original test of the society was changed into an oath of secrecy and fidelity; its original objects—reform and emancipation—were now merged in aims amounting to revolution and the establishment of a republican government. These designs, however, were not ostensibly set forth; for a great number of the members, and even of the leaders, were not prepared to travel beyond the Hounslow limit of reformation. The proceedings of the society ceased to be of a public nature; the wording of its declaration was so altered as to embrace the views both of reformers and republicans, and the original explanation of its grand aim and end—the equal representation of the people in parliament—was now changed into the phrase, "a full representation of all the people of Ireland"; thus adding the word "all", and omitting the word parliament".

The civil organization of the society was likewise modified; the arrangement was perfected of committees, called baronial, county, and provincial. The inferior societies originally were composed of thirty-six members: in the new organization each association was limited to twelve, including a secretary and treasurer. The secretaries of five of these societies formed a lower baronial committee, and had the immediate direction of the five societies from which they had been taken. From each lower baronial committee one member was delegated to an upper baronial committee, which had the superintendence and direction of all the lower baronial ones in the several counties.

In each of the four provinces there was a subordinate directory, composed of two or three members of the society delegated to a provincial committee, which had the general superintendence of the several committees of that province.

In the capital, the executive directory was composed of five persons, balloted for and elected by the provincial directories. The knowledge of the persons elected for the executive directory was confined to the secretaries of the provincial committees, and not reported to the electors; and the executive directory, thus composed, exercised the supreme and uncontrolled command of the whole body of the union.

The orders of the executive were communicated to one member only of each provincial committee, and so on in succession to the secretary of each upper and lower baronial committee of the subordinate societies, by whom they eventually were given to the general body of the society.

The plan was considered by the executive to be admirably calculated to baffle detection. The key-note of the new overture of their declaration and re-organization was evidently representation. The attraction of such an extensive mechanism of election and delegation, for a people who had been vainly struggling for the acquisition or extension of the elective franchise, no doubt was the great inducement with the directory for the adoption of this complicated and widely-extending system of organization.

The organization of the United Irish system, after the change made in it from a civil to a military organization, and the progress of its plans at home and abroad, is accurately and compendiously set forth in the report from the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, dated 30th August, 1798, after the examination of Thomas Addis Emmet, Arthur O'Connor, Samuel Neilson, Oliver Bond, and John Hughes, and based chiefly on that examination. The following extracts are taken from that report :—

"It appears to your committee that the organization, as it is called, by which the directory of the Irish union was enabled to levy a revolutionary army, was completed in the province of Ulster on the 10th of May, 1795; that the scheme of extending it to the other provinces was adopted at an early period by the Irish directory; but it does not appear that it made any considerable progress beyond the northern province before the autumn of 1796, when emissaries were sent into the province of Leinster to propagate the system. The inferior societies at their original institution consisted each of thirty-six members; they were, however, afterwards reduced to twelve; these twelve chose a secretary and a treasurer, and the secretaries of five of these societies formed what was called a lower baronial committeee, which had the immediate direction and superintendence of the five societies who thus contributed to its institution. From each lower baronial committee thus constituted, one member was delegated to an upper baronial committee, which in like manner assumed and exercised the superintendence and direction of all the lower baronial committees in the several counties. The next superior committee were, in populous towns, distinguished by the name of district committees, and in counties by the name of county committees, and were composed of members delegated by the upper baronials. Each upper baronial committee delegated one of its members to the district or county committee and these district or county committees had the superintendence and direction of all the upper baronials who contributed to their institution. Having thus organized the several counties and populous towns, a subordinate directory was erected in each of the four provinces, composed of two members or three,

according to the extent and population of the districts which they represented, who were delegated to a provincial committee, which had the immediate direction and superintendence of the several county and district committees in each of the four provinces, and a general executive directory, composed of five persons, was elected by the provincial directories, but the election was so managed that none but the secretaries of the provincials knew on whom the election fell. It was made by ballot, but not reported to the electors; the appointment was notified only to those on whom the election devolved, and the executive directory thus composed assumed and exercised the supreme and uncontrolled command of the whole body of the union.

"The manner of communicating the orders issued by the executive directory was peculiarly calculated to baffle detection. One member of the executive alone communicated with one member of each provincial committee or directory. The order was transmitted by him to the secretary of each county or district committee in his province. The secretaries of the county and district committees communicated with the secretaries of the upper baronials in each county; they communicated with the secretaries of the lower baronial committees, who gave the order to the secretaries of each subordinate committee, by whom it was given to the several inferior members of the union. It appears that the leaders and directors of this conspiracy, having completed this their revolutionary system in the province of Ulster so early as the 10th of May, 1795, and having made considerable progress in establishing it in the autumn and winter of 1796 in the province of Leinster, proceeded at that period to convert it into a military shape and form, for the undisguised project of rebellion; and this project has been distinctly and unequivocally acknowledged by the aforesaid Arthur O'Connor, William James M'Nevin, Thomas Addis Emmet, and Oliver Bond, who have confessed themselves to have been leading and active members of this conspiracy, as will appear more distinctly to your lordships from the confessions which they have made before your committee.

"From the confessions of these persons it appears that the military organization, as they termed it, was grafted on the civil. That the secretary of each subordinate society composed of twelve, was appointed their petty or non-commissioned officer; that the delegate of five societies to a lower baronial committee, was commonly appointed captain of a company, composed of the five societies who had so delegated him, and who made up the number of sixty privates; and that the delegate of ten lower baronials to the upper or district committee was commonly appointed colonel

of a battalion, which was thus composed of six hundred men. That the colonels of battalions in each county sent in the names of three persons to the executive directory of the union, one of whom was appointed by them adjutant-general of the county, whose duty it was to receive and communicate military orders from the executive to the colonels of battalions, and in general to act as officers of the revolutionary staff. In addition to this establishment, it appears that a military committee was appointed (at a later period) by the executive directory to prepare a regular plan for assisting a French army, if any such should make a landing in this kingdom, by directing the national military force, as it was called, to co-operate with them, or to form a regular plan of insurrection, in case it should be ordered, without waiting for French assistance".*

End of Volume 1.

APPENDIX TO VOLUME ONE.

Excerpts from an original Official Document, headed "Account of Secret Service money applied in detecting treasonable conspiracies, pursuant to the provisions of the Civil List Act, 1793.

The original manuscript account of Secret Service money is of a small quarto size, bound in green vellum. The entries are made in minute handwriting, in black and red inks, somewhat faded and occasionally almost indistinct. The payments commence on August 21st, 1797, and end on March 31st, 1804. A complete copy of the entries in this book was printed by Sir John T. Gilbert, in a volume entitled:—"Documents relating to Ireland, 1795-1804; Official account of Secret Service money; Governmental Correspondence and Papers; Notice of French Soldiery at Kilalla; Statements by United Irishmen; Letters on Legislative Union with Great Britain", &c. 4 to. Dublin, 1893.

The original manuscript came into the hands of a Dublin bookseller about the year 1840, and was purchased by Charles Haliday, a Dublin Merchant. After the death of Haliday in 1866, the volume was presented by his representative to the Royal Irish Academy, in the Library of which Institution it is carefully preserved.

From the 21st of August, 1797, to Sept. 30th 1801	£38,419	8	0
And from Sept. 30th, 1801, to March, 28th, 1804	15,128	5	1
	£53,547	13	1

THE ACCOUNT UP TO SEPTEMBER,

"per Affidavit of Mr. Cooke".

1797.		PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Aug.	21.	E. Cooke, Esq., for M. ...	50	0	0
,,	22.	Newell	11	7	6
,,	22.	Mr. Cooke for Darcy Mahon ...	20	0	0
Sept.	1.	Mr. Cooke for M.	10	0	0
,,	1.	Kerr's wife, 1 guinea; Grey, 1 guinea; Mitchel, 1 guinea; ditto Mr. Cooke for Magowan	4	11	0
,,	2.	Mr. Cooke for Darcy Mahon ...	20	0	0
,,	7.	Diet and lodging bill for Mr. Smith and wife	77	17	10
,,	11.	Sir G. F. Hill	100	0	0
,,	12.	Mr. Cooke for M.	100	0	0
,,	16.	Jus. Bell in search of offenders, by Sirr	45	10	0
,,	16.	Mr. Dawes for Smith	20	0	0
,,	26.	Mr. Cooke for M.	200	0	0
,,	29.	Watkins, for diet of Messrs. Newell, Murdock, Lowry, Hayes, Kane, Harper, Shaw, O'Brien, M'Dermot, Kavanagh, Sandys ...	228	9	11½
,,	30.	Sent to Newell by post	10	0	0
Oct.	5.	Mr. Cooke for Magowan ...	4	11	0
,,	13.	Mary Gamble, for 13 weeks' lodging for Newell and Murdock ...	6	16	6
,,	5.	Ditto for Boyle	10	4	9
,,	23.	John Coghlan of Clonard ...	20	0	0
,,	19.	Mr. Cooke for Mr. Verner ...	22	15	0
,,	23.	Mr. Dawes for O'Brien's clothes ...	4	18	9½
,,	23.	Keeper of Bridewell for Bell Martin's diet, 21 weeks	12	16	10
,,	31.	Dawes, to send Smith to bring him to town	11	7	6
Nov.	3.	Bell Martin, to take her out of town	5	13	9
,,	4.	Mr. Dutton, by desire of Lord Carhampton	11	7	6
,,	6.	Allowance for 13 men in the Tower for one week, per Major Sirr ...	14	15	9
,,	9.	Lowry 3 gs., Newell 3 gs., and Newell (again), to go out of town ...	18	4	0
,,	10.	J. Pollock, per R [eceipt] ...	100	0	0
,,	15.	Ditto.	50	0	0
,,	22.	Mr. Cooke for Nicholls ...	10	0	0

1798.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Nov. 23.	Serj. Dunn of the Invalids, going with Grey to Derry	3	8	3
„ 23.	J. Pollock, Esq.	25	3	9
„ 27.	Capt. A. M'Nevin	150	0	0
„ 28.	Mr. Cooke for M'Carry ...	50	0	0
„ 29.	J. Pollock, Esq.	20	0	0
„ 29.	Subsistence of 13 men in the Tower	14	15	9
„ 30.	Smith	5	13	9
Dec. 8.	A. Worthington, balance of account in advance	45	10	0
„ 11.	J. Pollock, Esq.	300	0	0
„ 12.	O'Brien for a great coat; Grey, Mitchell, and Wheatley† one guinea each; Lindsey, two guineas ...	5	13	9
„ 12.	Cooke, to send to Newell ...	20	0	0
„ 13.	Patrickson, for diet and lodging of Smith and wife in the Co. Wicklow	9	2	0
„ 14.	W. B. Swan in search of offenders ...	20	0	0
„ 15.	Mr. Darcy Mahon	50	0	0
„ 18.	Smith, per his note	10	0	0
„ 18.	Fr. Cooke, for F——y	11	7	6
„ 19.	R. Marshall, by direction of Mr. Pelham	159	5	0
„ 20.	Jos. Nugent, by direction of Mr. Cooke	5	13	9
„ 20.	Smith, for clothes	20	0	0
„ 20.	Col. Longfield, for soldiers of the Cork Militia	127	8	0
„ 22.	Mrs. Morriss, for 15 days' lodging of Smith and wife, to 21st Dec. ...	14	9	3
„ 23.	Mr. Collins, sent to him in London...	108	0	0
„ 23.	W. Atkinson, of Belfast, expenses and allowance for going to England search of Magee	65	0	0
„ 23.	Earl Carhampton, for Ferris* ...	200	0	0
	(Ferris to have £100 per annum from Dec.)			
„ 29.	Ben. Eves, of Blessington, what he advanced to Johnston, alias Smith	14	4	1½
1798.				
Jan. 1.	Lindsay of the Fifeshire Fencibles, returning to Glasgow ...	20	0	0
„ 4.	Capt. Coulson	30	0	0
„ 4.	Serj. Chapman and John Connell ...	9	2	0
„ 5.	Lord Enniskillen, for Capt. St. George Cole, by direction of Mr. Pelham ...	100	0	0

* Ferris was an ex-Attorney of ill repute.

† Wheatley was the Scotch Fencible who swore against William Orr, in 1797.

1798.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan. 8.	Serjeant Denis M'Gawley, of the Roscommon Militia, by desire of Lord Carhampton	22	15	0
,, 8.	Mr. Marshall, by desire of Lord Pelham	113	15	0
,, 13.	Mr. Dutton	68	5	0
,, 13.	Mr. Cooke, for Mr. Higgins ...	100	0	0
,, 18.	Mr. Cooke, for Jus Bell ...	50	0	0
,, 20.	Wheatley, Mitchell, Grey, Chapman, Baynsham, and Travers, 1 guinea each	6	16	6
,, 20.	Mr. Smith	10	0	0
,, 20.	Mr. Cooke for Mr. Bell	40	13	9
,, 22.	Major Sirr for Bourke ...	5	13	9
,, 23.	Wheatley, to take him home ...	20	0	0
,, 25.	Mr. Cooke for Corbett	20	0	0
,, 27.	Major Sirr for M'Cann	5	13	9
,, 29.	Mr. Cooke for Warren	2	5	6
Feb. 2.	The Hon. C. Sheffington, what he paid Newell	22	15	0
,, 2.	Mr. Cooke for Mr. Bell	40	13	9
,, 2.	Mr. O'Brien, from the North ...	13	13	0
,, 9.	Mr. Cooke for B.	10	0	0
,, 16.	Newell, on going to England ...	56	17	6
,, 24.	Mr. Pollock for J. W. H. ...	56	17	6
,, 27.	Mr. Cooke (Mr. Cope) ...	341	5	5½
Mar. 6.	Rev. Mr. Vignolles, by direction of Mr. Pelham	6	16	6
,, 8.	Mr. Dawes for Joyce's clothes ...	4	15	2½
,, 13.	Wm. Logan, police constable, on going into the country	22	15	0
,, 14.	Mr. Philip Gahan, by direction of Mr. Cooke	1	2	9
15 15.	Serj. Chapman, to send his wife to Cork and bring her back ...	11	7	6
,, 16.	Mr. Swan, expenses of coach and guards, &c., at Mr. Bond's ...	23	13	6
,, 16.	Mr. George Murdock, by direction of Mr. Cooke	150	0	0
,, 20.	Lowry, by direction of Mr. Cooke, on Lord Castlereagh's letter ...	5	13	9
,, 20.	The two Joyces, to take them home...	11	7	6
,, 21.	Mr. Lee's 220 gs., by direction of Mr. Cooke	250	5	0
,, 22.	Major Sirr, for Brennan, by direction of Mr. Cooke	22	15	0
,, 26.	J. Welsh, expenses of bringing Kelaher and Wilson from Cork ...	34	2	6

1798.		PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Mar.	27.	Mr. Godfrey's expense of coach-hire to Arklow	3	19	1
,,	28.	Mr. Cooke	100	0	0
,,	28.	Chapman, to buy clothes on his going back to Cork	3	8	3
,,	29.	Mr. Lindsay, for Mr. Bell ...	20	0	0
,,	29.	Mr. Cooke, for Mr. Swan ...	100	0	0
,,	28.	Major Sirr, for Lennan and his two sons, who attended at Roscommon	5	13	9
,,	30.	Travers, to buy clothes on his going to Trim	4	11	0
,,	31.	Major Sirr, for Brennan ...	22	15	0
Apr.	2.	Lord Enniskillen, for Captain Henry St. George Cole	160	0	0
,,	3.	Mr. Cooke (for Mr. Verner) ...	11	7	6
,,	6.	Ditto, per his note	100	0	0
,,	7.	Major Sirr, for Doran, M'Alister, and Magrath, expenses coming home from the assizes	10	4	9
,,	7.	Oliver Carleton, on going to Mr. O'Connor's trial in England ...	115	0	0
,,	7.	Sir George Hill, for a man going to ditto	11	7	6
,,	7.	Mr. Dutton, going to England to attend Quigley's trial ...	34	11	0
,,	20.	J. Armit (account of Oliver Carleton), for expenses of a man sent by Sir G. Hill to attend the trials ...	34	11	0
,,	21.	Major Bruce, for soldiers of the Cork militia, looking for Trainor ...	1	2	9
,,	23.	Mr. Brownlow, going to Whitehaven for Sampson	11	7	6
,,	27.	Darcy Mahon	100	0	0
,,	27.	J. Pollock,* on going to England ...	110	0	0
May	3.	George Hobbs, by desire of Mr. Rochfort, of Co. Carlow ...	20	0	0
,,	3.	Major Sirr, for Bourke's widow, 3 gs., Edward Joyce, 1 g.	4	11	0
,,	3.	Grey, for clothes and lodging, by Mr. Cooke's desire	4	11	0
,,	3.	Lowry, by desire of Lord Castlereagh	2	5	6
,,	3.	Lord Carhampton's bill to Mr. Luttrell, on account of James Ferris, to 1st of May. (Ought to be 1st June), £50	54	3	4

* J. Pollock, Attorney, Registrar to Justice Downes. Cooke in a letter to Castlereagh urged Pollock's claim to a pension, on the ground that he had done much, and had secured for Government the services of Leonard MacNally and McGuckin. Ed.

1798.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
May 12.	Hon. R. Annesley; per Mr. Swan ...	50	0	0
,, 12.	Mr. Medlicott, by desire of Mr. Cooke	5	13	9
,, 12.	Major Sirr, for Brennan... ...	11	7	6
,, 14.	Counsellor Townsend, what he advanced in Cork to two persons to attend O'Connor's trial ...	34	2	6
,, 19.	Lowry, to buy clothes, and in full, by Mr. Cooke's desire	5	13	9
,, 24.	Bill remitted to Wright, alias Lawler	32	17	0
,, 31.	C. Brennan	22	15	0
,, 31.	Mr. William Edgar, by Mr. Cooke's desire	100	0	0
June 6.	Mr. Jennings	50	0	0
,, 12.	Mr. Dutton, by desire of Lord Castlereagh	50	0	0
,, 13.	Mr. Swan, by Mr. Cooke's desire ...	100	0	0
,, 13.	Mr. Dennis, for Mr. Ryan's widow, by ditto	100	0	0
,, 15.	J. Pollock, Esq., bill from London ...	109	7	6
,, 20.	F. H. Discovery of L. E. F.* ...	1000	0	0
,, 20.	Mr. Sproule	50	0	0
,, 21.	Mr. Stewart, Surgeon-general, for attendance on Lord Edward Fitzgerald, viz.: Mr. Garnett, who sat in the room, £22 15s.; Mr. Kinsley, for attending him in a delirium, £4 11s.; Surgeon Leake, sixteen days, £2, attendance twice a day ...	59	6	0
,, 30.	Fred. Trench, for Bergan ...	50	0	0
July 4.	J. C. Beresford	50	0	0
,, 4.	T. M'Donnell, for eight horses, with Dr. Esmonde,† and from Naas, 8th June	4	6	8
,,	Ensign Murray, York regiment, expenses of bringing priest Martin from Rathdrum	5	13	9
,, 19.	Major Sandys, on account of prisoners in the provost	100	0	0
,, 19.	Earl Enniskillen for Captain Henry St. George Cole	37	10	0
,, 25.	Major Sandys, on further account of prisoners in the provost ...	200	0	0

* This is believed to indicate Francis Higgins, the "Sham Squire". For further information on this question see W. J. Fitzpatrick's "The Sham Squire". Ed.

† Dr. Esmonde was hanged on Carlisle Bridge, Dublin. Ed.

1798.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
July 26.	Major Sirr for pistols for Mr. Reynolds‡	9	2	0
„ 26.	T. Collins's bill for London ...	54	17	6
„ 30.	Mitchell, to pay his rent and buy clothes	5	13	9
„ 31.	Mr. Sproule	30	0	0
Aug. 7.	Major Sirr, for Serjeant M'Dowall, of the Dumbarton Fencibles ...	11	7	6
„ 16.	J. Magin, per rect.	700	0	0
„ 17.	Ditto.	56	17	6
„ 17.	Chaise and horses, with Sir T. Esmond and Captain Doyle, from Bray, and returning with the officers who guarded them	2	3	4
„ 18.	O'Brien for eight men, at one guinea, and three men at half-a guinea ...	10	16	1½
„ 18.	Major Sirr, expenses of Conolly from Drogheda to Belfast, in July, and Conolly and Martin from Drogheda to Dublin, in August	6	18	8
„ 18.	J. Pollock, Esq., bill to F. Carleton, Esq., dated Newry	56	17	6
„ 18.	Serjeant Lodwick Hamilton, Roscommon Militia, by desire of Lord Carhampton, for attendance at assizes to prosecute ...	22	15	0
„ 27.	Mr. Taggert from Newtownards, by desire of Lord Castlereagh ...	10	0	0
„ 28.	Mr. Sproule	50	0	0
„ 28.	Cahill and Charles M'Fillan, per Mr. Marsden's note	4	11	6
„ 28.	Mr. Pollock's bill, dated Belfast ...	56	17	6
Sept. 6.	Charles M'Fillan	20	0	0
„ 7.	Mr. Taggert and three others, for attending Secret Committee, Co. Down	54	11	0
„ 12.	Major Sandys, for subsistence of prisoners in the barracks ...	58	16	8
„ 14.	Lieutenant Atkinson, of the Louth Militia, expenses of bringing La Roche and Teeling, French officers, to Dublin	16	14	10
„ 14.	Mr. Pollock's bill, Belfast ..	56	17	6
„ 14.	Major Sandy's subsistence of prisoners	100	0	0
„ 22.	Mr. Sproule	24	14	7
„ 24.	Mr. Cooke	10	0	0

‡ This is the notorious Thomas Reynolds who betrayed Oliver Bond.

1798.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Sept. 26.	Mr. Ellis, from Enniskillen, for his expenses	20	0	0
,, 29.	Mr. Thomas Reynolds	1000	0	0
Oct. 9.	F. Dutton, by desire of Lord Castlereagh	50	0	0
,, 19.	Mr. Sproule	20	0	0
Sept. 22.	Subsistence at Cork of the Hills, witnesses for the crown ...	74	4	9
,, 22.	Thomas Collins's bill from London ...	54	3	4
Oct. 24.	Mr. Tucker, of King's End, for M'Carry	20	0	0
Sept. 27.	Mr. O'Brien, for men—Grey, Mitchell. Travers, O'Neill, Bourke, Chambers, and Lindsay	21	0	10½
Nov. 12.	Major Thackeray, his expenses from Derry with Theobald Wolfe Tone...	28	8	9
,, 16.	Mr. T. Reynolds	2000	0	0
,, 17.	Lord Carhampton's bill for Ferris, half year	54	3	4
,, 20.	Bill remitted to Wright, alias Lawler	32	14	0
,, 20.	Mr. Nugent, to take him back to England	5	13	9
,, 24.	Right Hon. D. Browne for Flattelly, who prosecuted F. French, Esq., at Castlebar, for high treason ...	100	0	0
,, 29.	Bryan Lennan, by direction of Lord Castlereagh	30	0	0
Dec. 8.	E. Cooke, Esq.	500	0	0
,, 15.	For informer respecting O'Neill, Major Sirr	11	7	6
,, 15.	Mr. John Mahon, by direction of Mr. Cooke	200	0	0
,, 15.	William Plunkett for attending courts-martial at Castlebar	227	10	0
,, 31.	Major Sirr for six men as Christmas boxes	6	16	6
,, 31.	Mr. Pollock for two persons, £50 each	100	0	0
1799.				
Jan. 1.	Major Sirr	500	0	0
,, 5.	Thomas Lennan to take him to England, by direction of Lord Castlereagh	12	0	0
,, 12.	Grey, Mitchell, Bourke, O'Neil, Lindsay, and Chambers ...	7	19	3
,, 18.	W. B. Swan, per Mr. Cooke's order...	100	0	0
,, 19.	Mr. T. Reynolds, per receipt ...	1000	0	0
,, 23.	J. Pollock, Esq.	1137	10	0

1799.		PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan.	24.	Rev. George Lambart, per Mr. Cooke's note	300	0	0
,,	26.	Mr. Collins's bill dated London ...	55	5	0
Feb.	9.	Mr. Cooke for N.	22	15	0
,,	9.	O'Brien, expenses for three men to Bray, two days' coach hire ...	1	19	0
,,	12.	Sir J. Blaquiere for Leonard Cornwall	22	15	0
,,	15.	Serjeant Daley, per Mr. Cooke's note	10	0	0
,,	16.	J. Pollock for T. W. £150,* G. M. £50	200	0	0
,,	20.	Earl of Enniskillen, for Captain H. St. George Cole	75	0	0
,,	22.	Major Sirr, for O'Kean, to take him away	10	0	0
,,	23.	Mr. Crofton, for three men of Mohill, Co. Leitrim	34	2	6
Mar.	4.	Mr. Reynolds, to complete £5000, viz.: September 29th, £1000; November 16th, £2000; and January 19th, £1000	1000	0	0
,,	2.	Thomas Jones Atkins, per Mr. Marsden's note	113	15	0
,,	5.	J. Pollock for M'G.† sent by post to Belfast	60	0	0
,,	6.	Dr. Harding, for the Hills' subsistence at Cork	18	4	0
,,	12.	Colonel Jackson for Mr. Moran, by direction of Lord Castlereagh ...	100	0	0
,,	15.	Marquis of Waterford, for Dr. Hearn	70	0	0
,,	16.	Lord Boyle, by direction of Mr. Cooke	100	0	0
,,	19.	Oliver Carleton, Esq., for Shea, who was to prosecute pikemakers ...	20	0	0
,,	25.	Mr. Marshall for Fred. Dutton, per bill on Harriss, London ...	550	0	0
Apr.	18.	Mr. Pollock, per receipt ...	50	0	0
,,	20.	Right Hon. Denis Brown, for Michael Geraghty	50	0	0
,,	25.	Sir John Carden, for Brown and Cahill	100	0	0
,,	27.	Thomas Collins's bill, dated London...	55	10	0
May	1.	Thomas Kearney, recommended by Sir J. Parnell, from Queen's County...	56	17	6
,,	3.	J. Pollock, Esq., for G. M. J. ...	50	0	0
,,	4.	R. Cornwall, Esq., amount advanced by him last year to Kelly and Nowlan for information, as per account	73	18	9

* Sir John Gilbert says the initials T.W. denotes Leonard MacNally.
† M'G. James McGuckin, Attorney, Belfast.

1799.		PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
May	8.	Mr. Cooke on advance	400	0	0
,,	8.	Bill remitted to Wright, alias Layler, at Bath	54	17	6
,,	9.	Henry St. George Cole, per Lord Enniskillen, one quarter ...	37	10	0
,,	13.	Cummins, by direction of Mr. Cooke	5	13	9
,,	20.	Mr. Cooke for K.	50	0	0
,,	20.	Mr. Richard Jennings, of London, per Mr. Robert Norman ...	200	0	0
,,	20.	Mr. Marshall for what he paid in London by Lord Castlereagh's direction, to Dutton, and also to R. Jennings	111	0	10
,,	24.	Mr. Darcy Mahon, per Mr. Cooke's desire	100	0	0
,,	27.	Mr. Sproule, by direction of Mr. Cooke	28	8	9
,,	27.	Alexander Worthington ...	50	0	0
June	3.	Support of the Hills, of Cork, to Dr. Harding	27	6	3
,,	4.	Mrs. Carey, in full discharge of Mr. Carey's demands	100	0	0
,,	5.	Mr. Pollock, account of G. M. J. ...	50	0	0
,,	14.	Mr. Reynolds, in full to 25th March	1000	0	0
,,	14.	Lord Carhampton, for Ferris, half-a-year	54	3	9
,,	18.	Earl of Altamont, by direction of Lord Castlereagh, for Jennings and Conmee, two priests, £50 each; Raffarell, £20; Clerk, £11 7s. 6d., and Sheriff of County Mayo, £53 3s. 6d. ...	184	11	0
,,	19.	Mr. Darcy Mahon for B., by Mr. Cooke's order	100	0	0
,,	28.	T. Collins's bill dated London ...	55	10	0
July	8.	Mr. Cooke for Nicholson... ...	20	0	0
,,	9.	Ross Mahon for the discovery of the Hardimans	68	5	0
,,	17.	T. Collins's, bill dated London ...	55	10	0
,,	24.	Major Sirr for Hugh M'Laughlin ...	22	15	0
,,	25.	J. Lindsay to take him home, and in full of all demands	100	0	0
,,	25.	Hugh M'Laughlin, per Mr. Marsden's note	20	0	0
,,	25.	Harper, to take to Mr. Price's Saintfield, Co. Down	11	7	6
Aug.	3.	Mr. Pollock, for G. M. J. ...	100	0	0
,,	23.	Thomas Collins's bill	55	15	0

1799.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Aug. 30.	Henry St. George Cole, by Lord Enniskillen	37	10	0
„ 30.	Expenses of bringing J. Townley and William Wallace to Co. Down, to prosecute rebels	28	6	1
Oct. 1.	M'Guckin, Belfast, per post, by direction of Mr. Cooke ...	50	0	0
„ 19.	Henry St. George Cole, Esq., high sheriff, Co. Waterford, expenses of apprehending and convicting rebels, per Col. Uniacke	100	0	0
„ 22.	Sir G. F. Hill, for M'Fillan, Murphy, Honiton, and Birch	460	0	0
„ 22.	Sir C. Asgill, for Anglen, a priest ...	50	0	0
Nov. 5.	Thomas Collins's bill, dated Gosport	56	2	6
„ 6.	Geraghty, per Gustave Rochfort ...	100	0	0
„ 9.	Major Sirr, for discover of an attempt to break the New Gaol ...	22	15	0
„ 9.	Mr. Marsden, to remit to an English bank note, for £50	56	0	0
Dec. 5.	Henry St. George Cole, Esq., one quarter	37	10	0
„ 13.	Mr. Cooke	50	0	0
„ 13.	Diet and lodging for Ross, an English messenger, with six assistants from London, with Napper Tandy and other prisoners	24	16	0½
„ 14.	Hanlon, for 16 men at one guinea, and four at half-a-guinea each ...	20	9	6
„ 19.	James Flannagan, by order of the lord-lieutenant	20	0	0
„ 21.	Major Sirr, for the person who discovered Bermingham	17	1	3
„ 27.	Serjeant John Lee, by direction of Mr. Cooke	100	0	0
„ 28.	Hanlon (and his twenty men as before)	20	9	6
1800.				
Jan. 3.	Mr. Cooke, for N.	5	13	9
„ 3.	O'Brien, amount paid him for coach-hire with prisoners, per account, vouched by Major Sirr ...	19	4	0
„ 7.	Mr. Cooke, for K.	50	0	0
„ 19.	Mr. St. George Cole, by direction of Mr. Cooke	200	0	0
„ 19.	Justice Drury	100	0	0

1800.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Jan. 21.	Mr. Pollock, for M'Guckin ...	100	0	0
,, 27.	Colonel Uniacke, for prosecutors, Co. Waterford.	200	0	0
,, 31.	Henry St. George Cole ...	37	10	0
Feb. 7.	Lord Carhampton, bill for Ferris's allowance, half-year ...	54	3	4
,, 9.	Mr. Cooke, for Fitzgerald ...	250	0	0
,, 24.	Colonel Fitzgerald, of North Cork Militia, for the mother of Sergeant Moore, killed in taking a rebel ...	25	0	0
,, 27.	Mr. Cooke, for M. N. ...	100	0	0
Mar. 6.	J. Baker, Col. Uniacke's note ...	100	0	0
,, 14.	Capt. W. Harris, of the Killeshandra cavalry, expenses of bringing up Matthew Tone, September, 1798 ...	20	6	3
,, 14.	Watkins, for Mr. Dease and Mr. Waldron's diet and lodging, December and January, to the 24th February	105	18	5
,, 18.	Mr. Archer, high sheriff, Co. Wicklow	100	0	0
,, 21.	J. Pollock, for T. W.	200	0	0
April. 1.	M'Guckin, per Mr. Marsden ...	50	0	0
,, 3.	Coleman, per letter from E. D. Wilson, Esq.	11	7	6
,, 3.	Clothes for Coleman and Burns, in the Tower, per Major Sirr ...	3	9	1
,, 3.	Mr. Thomas Collins's bill, dated Dominica	55	17	6
,, 16.	Sir Richard Musgrave, for Michael Burke, to take him to England ...	5	13	9
,, 13.	Ditto for ditto, 13 weeks' allowance in advance, from 12th April ...	14	15	9
,, 19.	Hon. W. W. Pole, for informers, Queen's County	100	0	0
,, 21.	Mr. Ram, for Serjeant Tuttle, who prosecuted Wexford rebels ...	22	15	0
May 2.	Lord Rossmore, for the widow Portland, whose house at Newtown Mount Kennedy was destroyed by the officer commanding when the rebels attacked the town ...	10	0	0
,, 2.	Henry St. George Cole, one quarter...	37	10	0
,, 5.	Henry St. George Cole, by Col. Uniacke	200	0	0
,, 22.	Andrew M'Neven, by post to Carrickfergus	300	0	0
,, 23.	Mr. Cooke, for N.	10	0	0

1800.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
June 11.	M'Guckin, per Mr. Marsden ...	50	0	0
,, 11.	Coleman	11	7	6
,, 17.	Col. Jones, Leitrim Militia, expenses of executing Dunn and Cottin, two rebels, at Naas and Ballymore Eustace, December, 1799. ...	10	0	0
,, 17.	Earl Carhampton, for Ferris, half a year	54	3	4
July 1.	Bryan Lennon, in full and positive discharge of all demands ...	11	7	6
,, 16.	Alexander M'Donnell, per Mr. Marsden	150	0	0
,, 17.	Major Sirr, for Edward Boyle, Michael Fagan, Michael Higgins, Daniel Gore, James Murphy, John Kearney, 30 gns. each, in full discharge of their claims for service ...	204	15	0
,, 21.	Mr. Pollock, for M'G.	100	0	0
,, 23.	Dr. Harding, from Cork, by desire of Lord Castlereagh	500	0	0
,, 24.	Mr. Pollock, for T.W.	100	0	0
,, 26.	Isaac Heron, a young man taken up and confined in the Tower instead of another person, who dropped a paper in England, signed Colclough ...	11	7	6
Aug. 2.	Major Sirr, to take men to Hacketstown	22	15	0
,, 4.	R. Harper, to take him to the assizes, Co. Down, and back	17	1	3
,, 7.	H. St. George Cole	37	10	0
,, 18.	James Edward Hill, from Cork ...	5	13	9
,, 27.	Major Sirr, per Mr. Trevor, for———	56	17	6
Sept. 11.	Magan, per Mr. Higgins ...	300	0	0
Oct. 1.	Mr. Marsden, for Murphy, who was sent from London	20	0	0
,, 13.	Mr. Cooke	200	0	0
,, 14.	Captain Fitzgerald, per Mr. Cooke ...	100	0	0
,, 18.	Murphy from London, by desire of Mr. Marsden	11	7	6
,, 23.	Murphy, to return to London ...	22	15	0
,, 24.	Mr. Cooke, for N.	20	0	0
,, 24.	Henry Laverty, from Portaferry, by Lord Castlereagh's desire ...	5	13	9
Nov. 2.	N. per Mr. Cooke's note	30	0	0
,, 7.	Henry St. George Cole, one quarter to October	37	10	0
,, 14.	Lord Carhampton, for Ferris, half a year	54	3	4

1800.	PAYMENTS.	£	s.	d.
Nov. 14.	Mr. Cooke	200	0	0
,, 18.	Neville, for Ann Lewis, £300, for W. Pollen £200, per receipt ...	500	0	0
Dec. 3.	George Clibborn, per receipt ...	500	0	0
,, 24.	W. Wright, remitted to him per his letter	54	15	0